

PLAYSTATION PLUS

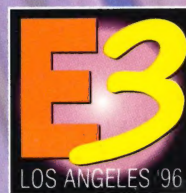
THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE SONY PLAYSTATION AND MORE...

wipeout²
2097

**PSYGNOSIS LEADS THE NEW
WAVE OF PLAYSTATION TITLES.
FULL DETAILS IN OUR EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW.**

THE GREATEST GAMES

**AT THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH...
OVER 200 NEW RELEASES UNVEILED INSIDE.**





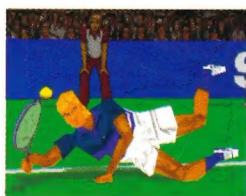
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SAMPTRAS EXTREME TENNIS™

Sportsmaster
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Codemasters

CONTENTS

COVER STORY

WIPEOUT 2097: 38

At the end of September 1995, the PlayStation was launched across Europe. By Christmas, over fifty percent of PlayStation owners had bought themselves a copy of the Psygnosis game, *Wipeout*. By the end of March this year, European sales of the game had reached the 250,000 unit mark, and now Psygnosis are ready to reveal the amazing sequel – *Wipeout 2097*. *PlayStation Plus* travels to Psygnosis and one hundred years into the future. Very few games have had the impact that *Wipeout* has, with magazine features, and radio and television reports using it as the main image for anything PlayStation related. Unsurprisingly we're in for a bit of a sequel.



PREVIEW SPECIAL

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH: 6

Once again Los Angeles played host to the biggest and best exposition for the electronics entertainment software industry, and *PlayStation Plus* was there.

What's new, fab and groovy? How far is the PlayStation going to be pushed with the games we can expect to see on the shelves over the next eighteen months? Old favourites such as *Doom*, *Star Wars* and the *X-Men* stand alongside newbies like *Crash Bandicoot* and *Tobal No. 1*. Is the quality games momentum being continued? How retro can retro go? And how reliant on licenced games is the industry going to be?

Our thirty-page, in-depth report will provide more than a few answers to all your, and indeed all our, questions.

OLYMPIC SOCCER



RETURN FIRE



FEATURES

INVASION OF THE POP STARS: 104

Perhaps unsurprisingly, when CD games began appearing, it was assumed that CD quality music would accompany them. *Wipeout*, for instance, hired The Chemical Brothers, Leftfield and Orbital – top dance tunesmiths all. But is the takeover of the games market by such MTV regulars what we need? *PlayStation Plus* talks to those who make the decisions, as well as some whose own music is being shoved aside in the search for success in two Top Tens.

INVASION OF THE POP STARS



THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH



REVIEWS

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Conrad Hart is back, blowing large holes in the amphibious Morphs. Good luck to him!

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Tanks, 'copters and jeeps are amongst your vehicles as you invade the bad guys.

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With the Wimbledon championships current flavour of the month, can this fail?

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He still looks more like a kangaroo, but Cheesy may be the best platformer yet.

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Take the Olympics, add soccer and you have a sure-fire winner. Or so US Gold hope.

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Every kid wants to drive trains, apparently. But how about building the railway routes?

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Everything you need to know about smashing enemy robots or dinos to a pulpy mess in *Rise 2 Resurrection* and *Primal Rage* plus a handful of helpful hints for *Namco Museum Vol 1*, *Alien Trilogy*, *Gex* and *Theme Park* amongst others.

PLUS POINTS: 112

Your views on advertising within games, whether *Alien Trilogy* knocks spots off *Doom* and whether *Lone Soldier* is all it's cracked up to be.

ONE TO ONE


SLEEPING WITH THE DEVIL: 48

id Software has single-handedly changed the face of video gaming with *Doom*, the game that inspired a tidal wave of other hopeful wannabes. With *Quake* on the verge of release and a whole load of PlayStation conversions currently in development, id Software was at Spring's European Computer Trade Show to talk about unexpected success and life after *Doom*.



CONTENTS





May 16th, Downtown Los Angeles. As the morning sun beats down over the Hollywood hills thousands of sweat-drenched journalists hungry for the latest gossip congregate outside the LA Convention Center. They're not looking for film stars though, nor do they want the latest blockbuster movie. They want video games. The E3 show in Los Angeles is the high point of the software calendar. All the major software houses and development teams are under one roof as they unveil all the latest licences and forthcoming titles.

Last year's show began the run up to the PlayStation's release, while the 1996 show re-affirmed the machine's dominance over the console market. With over 200 new titles on show, and another 100 or so announced, the PlayStation is assured a shining future.

With Hollywood but a few miles away from the exhibition hall, join us for a walk through the ultimate binary tinseltown...

Now Showing *Crypt Killer* • *Contra: Legacy of War*, *Lethal Enforcers 1 and 2* • *Broken Helix* • *Road Rage* • *Suikoden*, *Kumite: The Fighters Edge* • *Bottom of the 9th* • *NFL Full Contact* • *NBA In the Zone 2* • *Pinky & The Brain* • *Midnight Run*

Konami's impressive line-up ranges from the fast-paced shoot 'em up to the realistic sport simulation, both of which this softco specialises in.

Contra: Legacy of War is the PlayStation sequel to the classic blast that first appeared back in 1987, and is the first game on the Sony machine to feature a smart 3D mode. One or two players must kill or be killed in this staggering shoot 'em up, choosing between four dead 'ard warriors and cycling through their stacked arsenal which includes everything from machine guns to flamethrowers to grenades.

Regular visitors to the arcade will already be familiar with *Crypt Killer*, an *Operation Wolf*-style blast haunted by rib-hurling skeletons and stumbling zombies. All six worlds will be converted across to the PlayStation, and combined with Konami's Enforcer light gun this home console version should capture all the excitement of the original. Likewise, the PlayStation versions of *Lethal Enforcers 1 and 2* promise to be arcade perfect, especially when combined with the devastating accuracy of the Enforcer light gun.

With *Kumite: The Fighters Edge*, Konami plans to take on the might of *Tekken 2* with its very own polygon-based beat 'em up that surpasses everything you've ever seen before. Why? Because the fighters bruise when hit, blood spurting from every deep gash, covering their texture-mapped torsos in crimson. Each warrior's style is a recognisable martial art too, so without a fireball in sight each bout looks bone-crunchingly realistic. But while *Kumite* has the thump to take on *Tekken*, does it have the stamina? Who knows, but one game that will keep players hooked for hours is *Broken Helix*, an arcade adventure that bears more than a passing resemblance to *Fade to Black*. That not a bad thing though, and Konami's futuristic extravaganza looks to be every bit as playable as Delphine's masterpiece, and combines elements of role-playing with adrenaline-pumping action sequences.

Climbing behind the wheel, *Road Rage* has nothing to do with the homicidal craze sweeping the nations motorways, but is instead a super-fast 3D racing game in similar vein to *WipEout*. Based on the coin-op *Speed King*, the PlayStation game will boast even more vehicles to drive



KONAMI'S JON SLOAN. OF THE COMPANY'S FORTHCOMING GAMES HE LISTS HIS FAVOURITE AS THE CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR. HE'S RIGHT, IT'S COOL.

and courses to race on, and with four different skill levels to compete at, *Road Rage* is a motoring phenomenon everyone will enjoy.

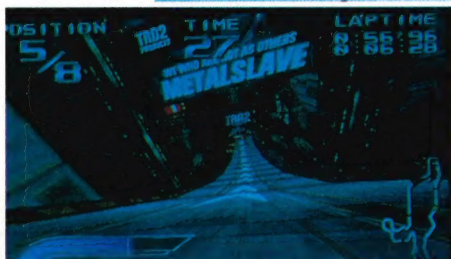
Suikoden is a little more niche, although this role-playing epic is considerably more accessible than most RPGs. A translation of the best-selling Japanese game, *Suikoden* is a welcome change to the sea of racing games and shoot 'em ups already available on the PlayStation. Beneath the glossy 3D texture-mapped graphics lies a dramatic quest for veteran and novice role-players alike, as players must further their characters skills by raising an army powerful enough to defeat the evil Red Moon Empire.

The remaining titles Konami has scheduled for release this year are still some way of completion, so as yet details are sparse. However, *Bottom of the 9th* and *NFL: Full Contact* will both be authentic simulations of baseball and American football respectively, while *Pinky & the Brain* will be a 'wild and crazy action adventure', starring the megalomaniacal rodents from the eponymous hit cartoon series. *Midnight Run* will be a PlayStation conversion of

Konami's popular arcade racer, while due this winter is a sequel to its excellent basketball simulation, *NBA In the Zone*. Predictably, it's called *NBA In the Zone 2*, and will feature enhanced graphics and a refined game engine, as well as updated stats and teams. For more information though, look out for a forthcoming issue of *PlayStation Plus*, coming soon to a newsagent near you.



ROAD RAGE



Konami

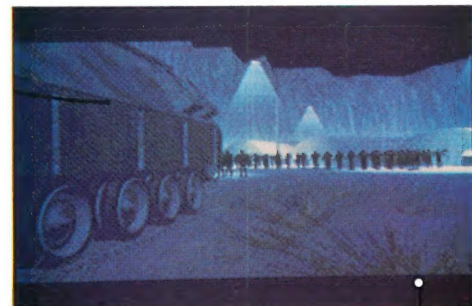
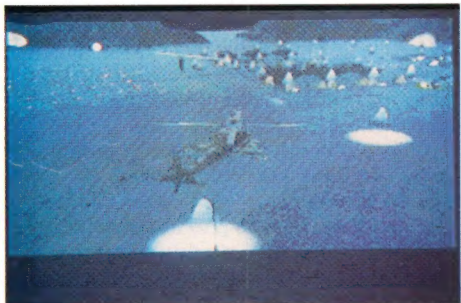
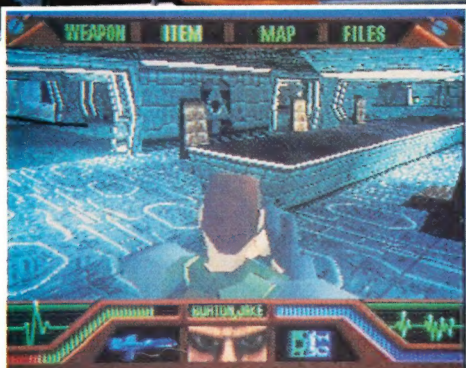


SUIKODEN





EXHIB HALL



BROKEN HELIX

Maxis

Two of Maxis best-selling games are eventually being converted to the PlayStation. *Sim City 2000* is still the definitive 'god game', a resource management epic in which wannabe mayor must build up a tiny village into sprawling metropolis. *A-Train* is a similar style of game, the PAL version of which is reviewed on Page 94 of this very issue of *PlayStation Plus*.



SIM CITY 2000



A-TRAIN

LOADED'S
THE CREAM
AND I'M
THE PUSSY



LOADED
ON PLAYSTATION AND SATURN

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Now Showing Tunnel B1 • Viper, Project Rally • Offensive, Allegiance • Project X2, Guts 'n' Garters • Advantage Tennis • Vanished Powers • Dawn of Darkness • HMS Carnage, Zoiks!

If you're a regular reader of *PlayStation Plus* you'll have already feasted your eyes on *Tunnel B1* in Issue 7. Since then, German developer Neon has been adding the final touches to its graphically gorgeous sewer-based shooter, so expect a review in the next couple of months. *Viper*, on the other hand, is still some way off. As yet only a short one-level demo of the game exists but already the prospects of the title are clear. It's a helicopter shoot 'em up, but one that pushes the PlayStation to its limits by creating some of the most fantastic battle sequences ever seen in a game. The enemies are cool and the weapons available are meaty, but above all the explosions are awesome! Okay, it may sound ridiculous to recommend a game on the basis of its explosions, but wait until you see these babies...

Another fruit of Neon's loins is *Vanished Powers*, a point-and-click adventure with a Tolkien-esque story and fantasy-style presentation. Precise details of the plot and overall aim of the game have yet to be confirmed, but the slaying of dragons will probably enter the equation at some point.

Looking to another of Ocean's affiliates, Team 17, we have *Allegiance*. Originally coded for the PC but now due to appear on the PlayStation, this first-person blast takes the *Doom* genre a step further by introducing elements of strategy to the gameplay. Well, there are a few puzzles to solve anyway, as secret agents battle through ten missions of sabotage and subterfuge. *Project X2*, also from the Wakefield developer, is a shoot 'em up from the old skool. Combining both horizontal and vertically scrolling levels, this next generation blast brings together all the elements of a classic arcade game: loads of power-ups, dazzling graphics, stomping sound and total destruction at your tips of your fingers. Of course, there are also gargantuan guardians to defeat, but one sniff of the monster weapons available should send them packing.

With *Project Rally*, Ocean has tried to create something a bit different from the *Ridge Racers* of this life, and has instead opted for an isometric view that still give the impression of a three-dimensional world. With rally cars boasting an accurate driving model, players are invited to test their skill on



DECLAN BRENNAN OF OCEAN SOFTWARE THINKS THE STUNNING TWO NEON TITLES, TUNNEL B1 AND VIPER, WILL BE HUGE HITS ON THE PLAYSTATION.

any of the eight dirt tracks, either competing head-to-head or challenging the computer-controlled drivers in the racing league.

Adverse weather conditions make driving treacherous, and the tricky night-time circuit can only be survived intact by the most skilful of drivers.

Offensive is another test of ability, but one that pushes the player's tactical skills to the full. A war-torn strategy game for one or two players, *Offensive* has on offer a wide selection of missions to undertake, the objectives of each varying accordingly but taking part during World War II. The isometric viewpoint allowing would-be Generals to control anything from single foot troops to entire battalions of tanks, and because each conflict takes places in real-time, players must be quick on the trigger finger as well as strategically minded.

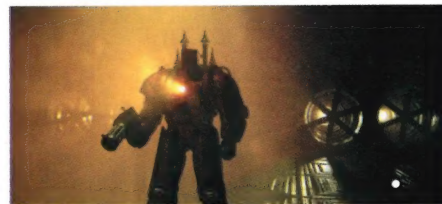
Dawn of Darkness is quite so complex, although Ocean still reckons its 3D blaster is more than a mindless gore-fest. After an undead army all but wiped humanity from the face of the Earth, a handful of survivors remains to restore peace and harmony to the dying planet. The lone warrior must tracked down the skeletal warriors to their source, roaming through a virtual city the size of London (!) and ultimately arriving in the lair of the necromancer Mordae. Up against stiff competition from the likes of *Quake*, *Dawn of Darkness* certainly has it all to prove. However, because it packs more weapons than a serial killer this horrific journey into the ethereal certainly has the firepower to fight off the opposition.

HMS Carnage is set in an alternative future, a future in which the rocket engine has yet to be invented and steam power is the key to success. On the surface of Mars massive armies battle for domination and as one of England's finest, you're called upon to push back the forces of the invading enemy. How? By commanding fleet of elastic-powered aircraft and steam dreadnought across Mars' dusty red surface, ripping through the enemies' defensive lines as if they were paper.

Advantage Tennis joins the sports sim fray, battling for place on the winners rostrum. If going to be tough though, but the game's 3D graphics and



DAWN OF DARKNESS



HMS CARNAGE



TUNNEL B1

four-player simultaneous action ensure Ocean are in with a chance. As for *Zoiks!*, it's "the first truly interactive Hanna Barbera game", and stars well-known characters such as Dick Dastardly, Scooby-Doo, Fred Flintstone and Huckleberry Hound. Exactly how the game will play has yet to be seen, although it is said to "successfully combine traditional animation techniques with the latest video and graphic technology, to bring the world of Hanna Barbera to life". Let's hope it's not just a case of nice graphics, shame about the gameplay then.

Guts 'n' Garters, the last title of Ocean's roster, features over 200 rendered cutscenes, realistic motion-capture animation and the chance to play as either 'Guts' or 'Garters'. The dynamic duo must prevent the hideous Doctor Wart from conducting his genetic experiments, but exactly how they must do this will remain a mystery until the game is released at the end of the year.

Ocean



ZOIKS





GUTS AND GARTERS



Hot-B USA

The appeal of fishing has always eluded me, but virtual angling seems even more ridiculous. Still, it's fast becoming one of the PlayStation's most popular sports, so it comes as no surprise that Hot B has *Big Bass World Championship* in development. No doubt we'll be showered with fish and (silicon) chip gags soon, then.



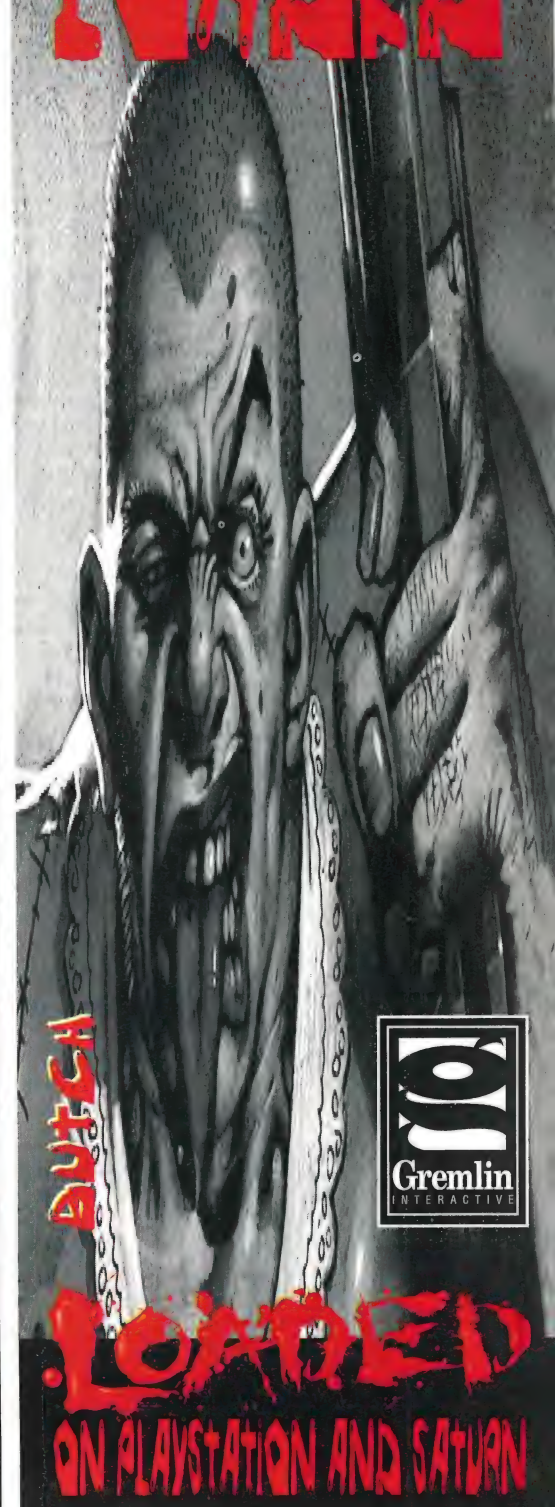
BIG BASS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



SONY'S IMPRESSIVE STAND AT LOS ANGELES E3 SHOW



IF YOUR
GONNA WEAR
PANTIES MAKE
SURE THEY'RE
LOADED



LOADED
ON PLAYSTATION AND SATURN

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Now Showing Soviet Strike • Time Commando • LBA 2 • Syndicate Wars • Shredfest
• Andretti Racing '97 • Madden NFL '97 • NHL '97 • Triple Play '97

Soviet Strike leads Electronic Arts' PlayStation attack and is the fourth in the award-winning Strike series. Following on from Desert, Jungle and Urban Strike, Soviet Strike marks the return of the AH-64 Apache gunship to combat service, pilots taking this baby across slick 3D photo-realistic terrain. Conceptually the game remains faithful to its parents, with players required to complete objectives in turn to gradually bring the enemy to its knees. There's now a selection of camera angle to choose from though, from the traditional fixed view to one that always faces in the direction of the gunship's weapons. It's not due for release until the autumn though, but PlayStation Plus will have exclusive information on EA's

flagship title in the very near future.

Time Commando is the brainchild of French developer Adeline, and is a action adventure set through different eras in time. From the prehistoric age to the distant future, computer repairman Stanley must eliminate the virus that's tearing holes in the time-space continuum. Graphically Time Commando is very impressive indeed, and seamlessly incorporates rendered graphics with free-moving sprite, but whether the game actually plays well has yet to be seen. Also from Adeline is LBA 2, or Little Big Adventure 2 to give it its full title. The sequel to the critically-acclaimed PC adventure, LBA 2 offers more of



BEING A MOTOR RACING FANATIC, EA'S DAVE WILSON IS TREMENDOUSLY EXCITED BY ANDRETTI RACING. SOVIET STRIKE IS ALSO A FAVOURITE.

the same isometric action for Twinsen and friends, although it also boasts a cool pseudo-3D mode that makes all-too-dreary task of exploration much more exciting.

Having proved it's titled convert successfully to the PlayStation with Magic Carpet (and not so successfully with Hi-Octane), Bullfrog is currently working on a next generation version of its strategic blaster, Syndicate Wars. Encapsulating a bleak cyberpunk future with its grim, atmospheric presentation, the game focuses on the battle between the massive corporations that dominator the world in the 21st Century. So desperate are these companies to maintain control of the globe, they'll stop at nothing to defeat the opposition, even if that means destroying them. You control a squad of combat cyborgs assigned to everything from search-and-destroy missions to hostage rescues, wreaking havoc through the light-sourcing world in which the game takes places. Primarily a game for one player, there will also be a link open to allow two players to fight it out simultaneously. Electronic Arts also presents Shredfest, an action-packed blast that's due for release later this year.

New from EA Sports is Andretti Racing '97, a surprise release that encompasses both stock and IndyCar racing. Arguably the fastest racing game on the PlayStation the game combines detailed texture-mapped graphics with realistic driving mechanics, making for one of the most enjoyable racers of the year. Better still, there are options for two-player split-screens and link-up play, so up to four human drivers can compete in the race simultaneously.

EA Sports also have a handful of '97 updates in the pipeline, including all-new NHL Hockey, PGA Tour golf and Madden NFL American football titles. Although not drastically different from the original games, they'll offer brand new team rosters, improved presentations and refined gameplay. Triple Play '97 is the first title to exploit Electronic Arts' baseball license, and will present an authentic adaptation of the sport by bundling all the real-life teams and player rosters with smart motion-captured graphics in one neat package. In addition to the four announced sports sims, it's also rumoured that there will be an updated version of FIFA Soccer, but exact details have yet to be confirmed.



ANDRETTI RACING



MADDEN NFL '97



NHL HOCKEY '97



PGA TOUR '97

Electronic Arts



UBISoft

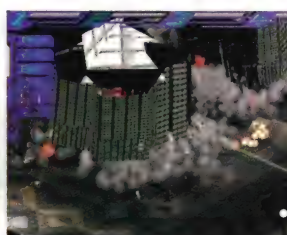
UBISoft Has plans to dominate the PlayStation once more with the return of its lovable thingummy, Rayman. The game, titled Rayman 2, will offer more of the same platform action. Also expect a PlayStation version of Street Racer.



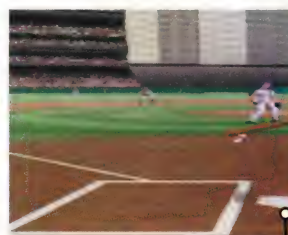
STREET RACER



SOVIET STRIKE



SYNDICATE WARS



TRIPLE PLAY '97

Now Showing Independence Day • Aliens Vs Predator • The Tick

Fox Interactive's move into the video game sector certainly looks set to be a success, what with *Die Hard Trilogy* already under its belt and a handful of other big-name titles on the way. First is *Independence Day*, the PlayStation adaptation of this summer's blockbuster movie. While the film stars Jeff Goldblum and tells the story of alien invasion, the game places gamers in the cockpit on one of 13 of the hottest jet fighters, ordered to eliminate any UFOs on sight. With aerial dogfights taking place over 16 world cities, wiping the alien scum from the face of the Earth is by no means an easy task.

Aliens Vs Predator is a conversion of the Atari Jaguar hit in which the universe's deadliest creatures battle it out for domination. Play as Giger's Alien defending its hive or climb inside the battle suit of the galaxy's most feared combatant, the Predator. Alternatively enrol as a space

marine and take both of the buggers on! Featuring high-resolution graphics and loads of levels to explore, *Alien Vs Predator* certainly has the firepower to take on *Doom* but does it lack the necessary pace?

The Tick is a wacky super hero aided by his sidekick, Arthur. Together they try to rid their home city of the super-villains lurking in the woodwork, mopping up the Million-Zillion ninjas and even an army of ram-paging cornstalks!

Fox Interactive



INDEPENDENCE DAY

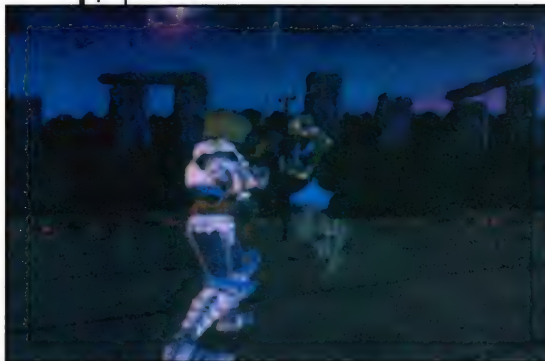
Universal Studios Interactive

Universal Studios enters the video game sector under the guise of Universal Interactive, the first fruits of its loins being *Disrupter*. It's a *Doom*-style blaster, but one with true 3D graphics and loads of death-dealing to find.



Take 2

The market is soon to be swamped by beat 'em ups, as Take 2's *Ironblood* joins the fight for a piece of PlayStation action. It's a 3D fighter that looks similar to *Toshinden*, with many of the characters carrying weapons and all boasting some nifty special moves.



ReadySoft

Are ReadySoft still producing unplayable *Dragon's Lair*-style games after all these years? Hopefully not, but the truth will be known when *Kingdom Shadoan* is released later this year.



THE E3 SHOW: ALMOST AS BIG AS LA ITSELF

STWANGE VIEW STWANGE



FUXANK



LOADED ON PLAYSTATION AND SATURN

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ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT EXPO '96

PRESENTS

GT INTERACTIVE

OLD SOLDIERS NEVER

DIE,

THEY JUST TURN INTO

BLOOD THIRSTY

MUTANT ZOMBIES.



FINAL DOOM

GT INTERACTIVE PRESENTS **QUAKE • HEXEN • WAR GODS**
MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY • DUKE NUKEM 3D
TIGER SHARK • HANGTIME • REBEL MOON RISING

Coming this summer.

**FINAL
DOOM**

Maintaining its close relationship with coding deities id Software, GT Interactive was proud to premier the super-sequel that will draw to a close the gaming legend that is *Doom*. *Final Doom* marks the end of an era for id, as once again the Texas-based team hand over the PlayStation reins to Williams. Essentially an extension of *Doom* rather than a completely new game, *Final Doom* offers over thirty brand new levels, many of which are unique to the PlayStation. As with the original, Williams exploit the machine's light-sourcing capabilities, and although no new monsters or weapons are planned, the game will feature half a dozen or so Deathmatch specific levels.

Final Doom is by no means the last PlayStation project for id though. As mentioned in Issue 5 of *PlayStation Plus*, work has already begun on a conversion of *Hexen: Beyond Heretic*.

Developed in conjunction with renowned RPGers Raven Software, *Hexen* is a mediaeval romp through the Chronos Dimension. Whereas *Doom* was infested with Satan's hellspawn, *Hexen* is plagued by mythical beasts such as Griffins and Minotaurs. Shotguns and the infamous BFG have all gone too, replaced by chunky battle hammers and magical rods that spit lightning bolts. It's still as manic as *Doom*, though, and those with a taste for green tights and elves named Gusty Wind will probably feel much more at home.

With *Quake*, id has has mixed elements of *Doom* and *Hexen* into one glorious package. Again, the game has a mediaeval feel to it with ogres and dragons lurking in dimly-lit dungeons, but meaty weapons like the shotgun and rocket launcher make a welcome return to make this the bloodiest game ever. As id are still honing the PC version of *Quake* to perfection, a PlayStation incarnation isn't due for quite some - not until next year, in fact. Boo.



GT INTERACTIVE ARE EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH THE NEWLY SIGNED OF DUKE NUKEM 3D, BUT CAN ANYTHING OVERSHADOW QUAKE?

During E3 GT Interactive also announced it has acquired the rights to publish the 3D Realms titles on PlayStation. *Duke Nukem 3D* will be the first to appear, and is set to rival *Doom* for sheer unadulterated blast



TIGER SHARK



HANG TIME

ing. It's another first-person perspective shoot 'em up, but one that is set in a true 3D environment. It also has extensive multi-player options and packs a massive ten weapons, from explosive rocket launchers to beam guns that shrink your opponent, allowing you to crush them underfoot! Other 3D Realms games in the pipeline include *Blood*, *Prey* and *Shadow Warrior*, as well as *Duke Nukem Forever*, although don't expect to see these until at least the middle of next year.

As well as *Final Doom*, Williams is also working on a further five PlayStation titles. The first is *Mortal Kombat Trilogy*, the last instalment in the record-

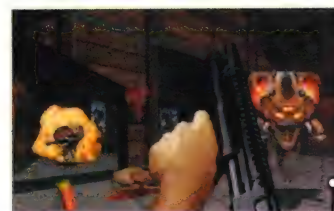
breaking beat 'em up series. Essentially a 'best bits' compilation, *Mortal Kombat Trilogy* is packed all the characters that ever appeared in the various *Mortal Kombat* games, along with all of the backgrounds, special moves and hidden secrets. Williams' other project is *Robotron X*, a 3D adaptation of the classic coin-op *Robotron 2084*. Packed with over 100 levels of furious blasting set to a stomping techno soundtrack, *Robotron X* promises to offer all the excitement of the original when its released during the Autumn.

Of the remaining three Williams' games, two are based on popular American sports. *Open Ice* and *HangTime* are both conversions of the arcade originals, and as such are action-based as opposed to true simulations. Boasting many of the stars from the NBA and NHL, both *Open Ice* and *HangTime* promise to offer two-on-two play for the ultimate in slam-dunking, puck-whacking action. Still with Williams, *War Gods* is the company's first attempt at the 3D beat 'em up. Scheduled for a late autumn release, the PlayStation game is still in its early stage of development but already looks to be arcade-perfect conversion.

Rebel Moon Rising is yet another *Doom*-style blaster, although its missions are very much strategy-based rather than all-out gore-fests. Little else is known about the game as its not due for release until 1997, although it will apparently feature some smart visual effects. *Tiger Shark* also looks very smart indeed, it's a shoot 'em up set above and below the ocean, the player piloting a futuristic battle fighter capable of skimming across the water's surface or diving below into the murky depths. Still far from completion, *Tiger Shark* is already frighteningly fast and should therefore hopefully be even more manic when it's unleashed next year.



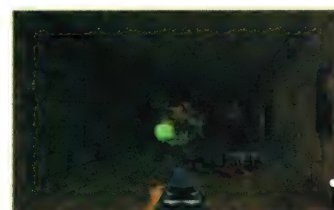
WAR GODS



DUKE NUKEM 3D



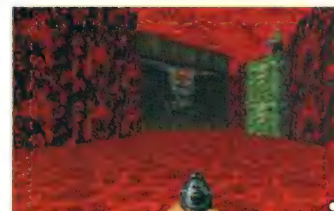
DUKE NUKEM 3D



FINAL DOOM



FINAL DOOM



FINAL DOOM



TIGER SHARK

Now Showing Marvel Super Heroes • Street Fighter Alpha 2 • Werewolf: The Apocalypse • Star Gladiator • Major Damage • Buster Bros. Collection • Fox Hunt.

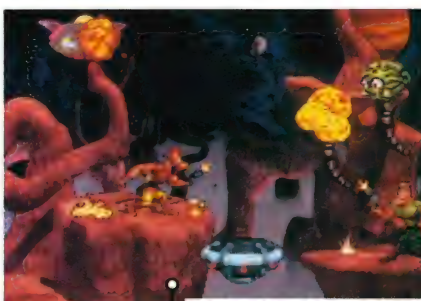
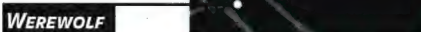
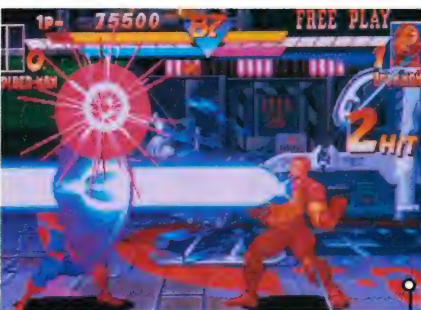
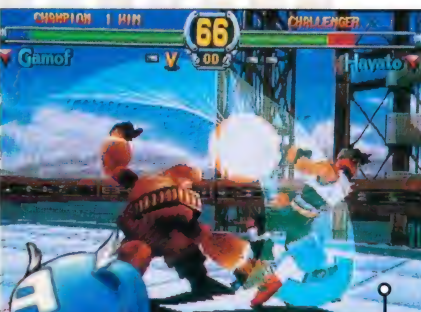
Sneaked previewed in Issue 6 of *PlayStation Plus*, *Marvel Super Heroes* combines the tried-and-tested Capcom beat 'em up formula with comic heroes like The Incredible Hulk, Spider-Man and Captain America. Much needed depth is added in the form of the Infinity Gem system though, which grants super-powers and allows for staggering special moves and combos. Of course, it's based on the arcade game and promises to be pretty much arcade perfect, as does *Street Fighter Alpha 2*. The sequel to *Street Fighter Alpha* which is currently enjoyable success in the charts, *Street Fighter Alpha 2* takes the 2D Capcom slap-fest to new levels with the inclusion of five new characters and the custom combo system which allows fighters to create their own multi-hit combos.

Star Gladiator is Capcom's first dip into the 3D beat 'em up, and very impressive it is too. A conversion of the coin-op, *PlayStation Star Gladiator* includes ten futuristic warriors each with their attacks and special moves. The machine's light-sourcing capabilities have also been used to great effects, to recreate the motion blur and transparent smoke that featured in the original.

A different game entirely is *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*. As one of seven different werewolves with varying abilities, one or two players must charge through six world to prevent the evil force of Wyrms from destroying the very spirit of Earth, Gaia. Multiple gameplay paths ensure *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* has extensive replay appeal, but even better are the SGI graphics in which man morphs into wolf. Nifty.

Major Damage is one of Capcom's newest characters who stars in this excellent debut. A platform game with some of the slickest graphics seen in this type of game, *Major Damage* is joined by Colonel Carnage in the two-player game as the pair jump across 16 levels to finally face Lord Fugu. Addictive gameplay is certainly the focus of *Major Damage*, although *Fox Hunt* is an interactive movie that could well be lacking in terms of player interaction. Okay, it's got over three hours of video footage, has over twenty challenging puzzles and features music by Faith No More, but surely some good old fashioned gameplay wouldn't go amiss?

Well we've got it on the *Buster Bros. Collection*, a compilation of the three balloon-bursting games including the brand new *Buster Buddies*. This makes a grand total of over 300 levels of power-ups and bubble-breaking, for one or two players either co-operating with each other or fighting it out on the manic head-to-head game.

**BUSTER BROS COLLECTION****MAJOR DAMAGE****WEREWOLF****MARVEL SUPER HEROES****STAR GLADIATORS**

T*HQ

T*HQ had just two games on show at E3, namely *Robo-Pit* and *K-1 Super Kick Boxer*. The latter is obviously a fighting game based on the ancient martial art while *Robo-Pit* is a high-powered blast in which players must build a superhuman robot and test it out against one of over a 100 opponents. Wow.



ASCII

King's Field and its imaginatively titled sequel *King's Field II* were premiered in their all-English guise. At long last, role-players won't have to struggle with Japanese text as they explore these monsters. There was also a new joypad on offer, the ASCII Specialised Pad. A variant of the ASCII pad already available in this country, the extras this pad has to offer include turbo and auto fire, and the never-useful slow-motion switch.



Gremlin Interactive

After enjoying huge success with *Actua Soccer*, Gremlin Interactive's PlayStation onslaught has been toned down somewhat. Just two game are imminently due, the first of which is the off-road racing game *Gears 'n' Guts*. Choose from six 4X4 buggies and race across half-a-dozen courses, challenging the computer drivers or going to head-to-head with a pal using the link-up option. *HardWar* drags the player into the future, onto a bleak moon of Titan. As an Operative you've free to explore the world in your ship, buying and selling cargo to make money, then investing it in bigger weapons with which to frag pirate ass. A monster game by anyone's standards, we'll be previewing *HardWar* in a future issue of *PlayStation Plus*.

Philips Media

Published under the Philips Media label, Cranberry Source presents *QAD*, or *Quintessential Art of Destruction* to give it's full title. Described by the company as Choplifter in 3D, *QAD* is frantic blasts for one or two players. Also from Philips is *Down in the Dumps*, a graphic adventure all about turds, and a cartoon racing game titled *Demon Driver*.





I'VE GOT THIS EARLY MORNING ROUTINE.

OXY AND OXYCUTE 'EM! ARE TRADE MARKS.

I CLEAN MY FACE WITH **OXY DAILY WASH** EVERY MORNING BECAUSE I DON'T WANT SPOTS. IT CLEARS MY PORES OF THE MUCK AND GREASE THAT CAUSES THEM. **SPOTS? OXYCUTE 'EM!**



IRON MAN X-O MANOWAR IN HEAVY METAL



Also starring
NBA Jam Extreme • Space Jam • Magic: The Gathering
Batman Forever • Bubble Bobble • The Crow: City of Angels
• X-Men: Children of the Atom • DragonHeart

Leading Acclaim's PlayStation assault is Iron Man, Marvel's comic hero and all round good guy. Joined by X-O Manowar, *Heavy Metal* is a slick side-scrolling platform romp in which the two super-heroes must take on super-villains from both comic universes including Arnim Zola and Mistress Crescendo. As pioneers of motion-capture technology, it comes as no surprise that Acclaim has used it to great effect to animate each of the rendered characters, while cool scaling effects give an incredible feeling of depth to the graphics. In addition to the run 'n' jump stages, there are also flying sections in which the dynamic duo take to the skies to continue their battle of good against bad.

Many of Acclaim's forthcoming titles are licences, with *NBA Jam Extreme* leading the pack. A bigger, beefier cousin of *NBA Jam TE*, *Extreme* takes two-on-two basketball to the next level with over thirty new slam-dunks, more 170 NBA stars and play-by-play commentary by Marv Albert. You can even choose a team made up of players with over-sized heads! If it's basketball with a twist you're after, look no further than *Space Jam*. Starring Michael Jordan, it's a

three-on-three dunk-fest with the big-footed b'ball star taking on the Looney Toons. Whether you're slamming with Taz, going for the allez-ooop with Bugs Bunny or shooting three-pointers with Porky Pig, *Space Jam* promises to be out of this world.

Extending its ties with the World Wrestling Federation, Acclaim also presents *WWF In Your House*.

Admittedly, an odd title, but the game is pretty much standard fare - a dozen fat Americans with bad haircuts, pretending to fight it out in the ring. The kids will love it though. More promising are the RPG tie-ins *Magic*:



ACCLAIM'S SIMON SMITH-WRIGHT THOUGHT "THE ACCLAIM GIRLS ARE THE BEST!"

The Gathering and *Iron & Blood*. Based on the collectible card game, *Magic: The Gathering* brings the creatures of war-torn Corondor to life in this 3D epic. *Iron & Blood*, a *Dungeons and Dragons* licence, takes the characters from the Ravenloft world and places them in this impressive 3D beat 'em up. With its impressive 3D engine capable of shifting 225,000 polygons a second, *Iron & Blood* boasts 18 combat arenas, 64 different weapons to fight with and some 250 combat moves, making it one of the biggest fight-fests on the PlayStation.

Batman Forever is a conversion of the smash-hit arcade game in which the Caped Crusader and his sidekick Robin must outwit the thugs of Two-Face and The Riddler. With cool rendered graphics and some bone-crushing combos, this side-scrolling beat 'em up may not be original, but at least it's full of action. Likewise, *The Crow: City of Angels* is just as frantic. Tied in with the forthcoming movie sequel, this side-scrolling fighter sees Brandon Lee's anti-hero stalking criminals in across a dark gothic landscape.

Another of Acclaim's movie licences is *DragonHeart*, an extravagant cinematic masterpiece that Acclaim has translated into, um, another side-scrolling beat 'em up. Although details are sketchy at the moment, the game will boast 120 moves to master, some neat graphics and a lot of walking to the right. Oh.

Forget state-of-the-art graphics though, pure gameplay is what we want and *Bubble Bobble* has got it by the bucketload. Undeniably the very best in plat-

form action, this two-player romp stars the prehistoric pair Bub and Bob as they leap through countless levels of bouncing brilliance.

X-Men: Children of the Atom may not have the cute appeal of *Bubble Bobble*, but it's one of Capcom's finest beat 'em ups to date. Starring Marvel super heroes such as Cyclops and Wolverine, *X-Men* takes the 2D fighting game a step further with the introduction of the Vector Theory, an attack system that allows fighters to aim ranged attacks in three directions. *Killing Zone* isn't quite so unique, and is by all accounts a straightforward 3D beat 'em up. However, rather than robots or super heroes fighting against each other, a horde of mythical creatures step into the arena, with minotaurs shoulder-barging into sword-wielding skeletons and so on.

Battlesport is the futuristic equivalent of boxing. Almost. Two battle tanks scream around a tiny arena, fragging each other's ass and firing a steel ball to score goals. Just as violent is *Killing Time*, a 3D shooter packed with challenging puzzles and blood-sucking undead creatures. Spawn, another of the fruits of Acclaim's comicbook licences, stars the super hero of the same name. It's a long way from completion though, so details haven't been finalised.

Acclaim four remaining titles are all sports simulations. *College Slam* is yet another basketball game but one that focuses on up-and-coming teams rather than professional line-ups. *V Tennis* is a realistic simulation that tackles every aspect of professional tennis, from the various court surfaces to TV-style camera angles to the 16 players of different skills.

NFL Quarterback '97 will tackle American football in great depth, packing all the stats, players and moves used by the pros last season, while *Super Motocross Championship* kick-starts the, some might say dangerous, sport of off-road biking into the next generation, with loads of smart 3D dirt tracks and cool aerial acrobatic moves.



BATMAN FOREVER



IRON AND BLOOD



IRON MAN



NBA JAM EXTREME



NFL



SPACE JAM



X MEN



SPACE JAM



19

Now Showing Marvel 2099 • Starwinder • The Raven Project • Mindscape Golf • Necrodome • Supersonic Racers • NCAA Basketball: Final Four '99 • Aaron Vs Ruth

The Hulk, Spider-Man and DareDevil are kicked into the 21st Century with Mindscape's heroic PlayStation adventure, *Marvel 2099*. Based on the comic series of the same name the game features a variety of gameplay styles, from side-scrolling platform sections to rides through cyberspace viewed from a first-person perspective. There are also loads of Marvel super heroes to encounter, from many of the X-Men to the Fantastic Four, with even The Punisher rearing his ugly head a one point during the game. But why the need for all these heroes? A super-villain answering to the name of Anthony Herod is planning to take over the world and you've got to stop him. Oh.

Starwinder is a racing game with a difference. At the helm of a space skimmer, Conner Rhodes must prove his mettle as a pilot by racing 35 circuits across the galaxy. The difference is while most racing games requires the player to simply steer left or right, in *Sidewinder* you have to move up and down as well! It's not easy, but at least there's a load of deadly weapons to make life more fun, along with tons and tons of cinematic sequences and a fully orchestrated soundtrack.

A more traditional driving game is *Supersonic Racers*, but even that's a bit weird. Why? It's a comedy arcade driving game, with cartoon characters speeding around thirty tracks which are viewed from a spectacular isometric viewpoint. Simple controls make *Supersonic Racer* a game that easy to pick up, but the inclusion of the

multi-player game makes this one you'll keep returning to.

Visually more impressive but nowhere near as playable is *The Raven Project*, a "cinematic action adventure". Okay, there are loads of cinematic cutscenes in the game and there's even the occasional action sequences, but where's the adventure? Divided into four sections, the objective of each one is pretty much the same: destroy everything, whether you're flying a ship or running around on the ground in a mechanised suit. Involving, eh?

Mindscape Golf just as realistic a game of virtual golf than any other sim on the PlayStation, but this time you can tee off on Hawaii's NaPali course, putt on the Stonehenge green or whack the ball from within a serene Japanese village! Weird. More

traditional is *NCAA Basketball: Final Four '97*. Apart from being one helluva mouthful, it's also a basketball game that offer complete freedom in terms of which angle you view the game from.

Apart from that, there's also the usual team stats on offer and numerous slam dunkin' plays to perfect. Remaining with American sports, *Aaron Vs Ruth* is a baseball management game that

gives the player the chance to coach some of the sports biggest names. A big-hit in America, for sure, but in England? I don't think so.

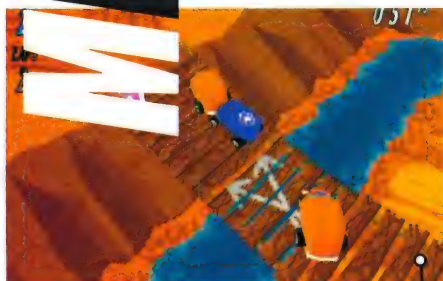
Mindscape also has the frenetic blaster *Steel Harbinger* in the pipeline, as well as the action game *Necrodome*, so keep your eyes peeled for more information on these two in a future issue of *PlayStation Plus*.



Mindscape



AMERICA IS FAMED FOR BEING OVER THE TOP. THIS HUGE STRETCHED LIMO IS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE.



SUPERSONIC RACERS



STARWINDER



AARON VS RUTH BASEBALL



NCAA BASKETBALL



MINDSCAPE GOLF



NECRADOME



RAVEN PROJECT

Now Showing Rebel Assault II • Dark Forces • Ball Blazer Champions • Herc's Adventures

Having dominated the PC with its ever-popular *Stars Wars* games, LucasArts is now looking to the PlayStation as a new platform to exploit. The first game to appear will be *Rebel Assault II*, an almost direct conversion of the PC original. Packed with the same levels, from flying the Millennium Falcon through winding mine shafts to skimming through dense woodland on the back of a speeder bike, one improvement the PlayStation game will offer is improved video footage thanks to the machine superior playback capabilities.

Dark Forces is another hit PC game that's being converted to the PlayStation, and

this autumn gamers will be able to experience for themselves the thrill battling the might of the Imperial army. More structured than *Doom* but just as action-packed, assume the role of a rebel mercenary ordered to penetrate the Imperial ranks to find out more about the nasty Empire's newest weapon, the Dark Trooper.

Herc's Adventure is an all-new game

designed specifically for the next generation consoles, and is an action adventure that follows the quest of super strong man Hercules as he ventures through ancient Greece. It's a humorous romp for one or two players, each choosing from three mortal heroes equipped with individual skills and powers.

Ball Blazer Champions, on the other hand, is a trip down memory lane, back to a game which proved tremendously popular on the Commodore 64. Conceptually the game remains pretty much the same, with two hover pods speeding around an arena, fighting over a small steel ball. However, the game now has a futuristic look, with detailed rocket craft skimming across light-sourced arenas. Better still, it plays well too!



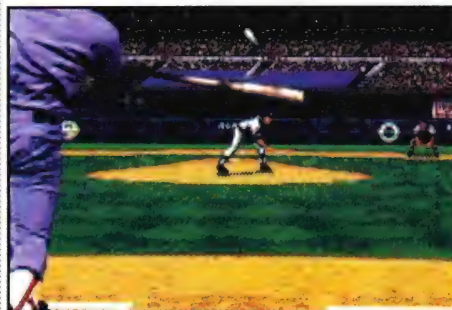
HERC'S ADVENTURES

LucasArts



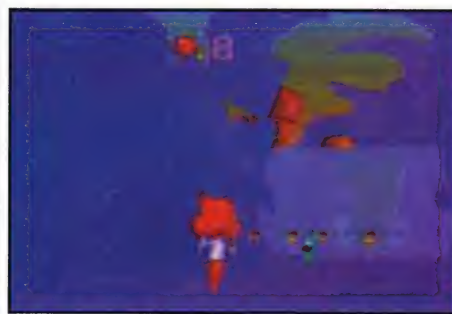
DataEast

DataEast had just four PlayStation products on show, two of which are sports games (yawn). *MVP Baseball '96* and *MVP College Football '96* are both scrabbling for a piece of the action, while *Creature Shock* is a conversion of Argonaut's mediocre blaster that originally appeared on the PC. Lastly there's *Dark Sun: Shattered Lands*, a massive role-playing game based on good old *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*.



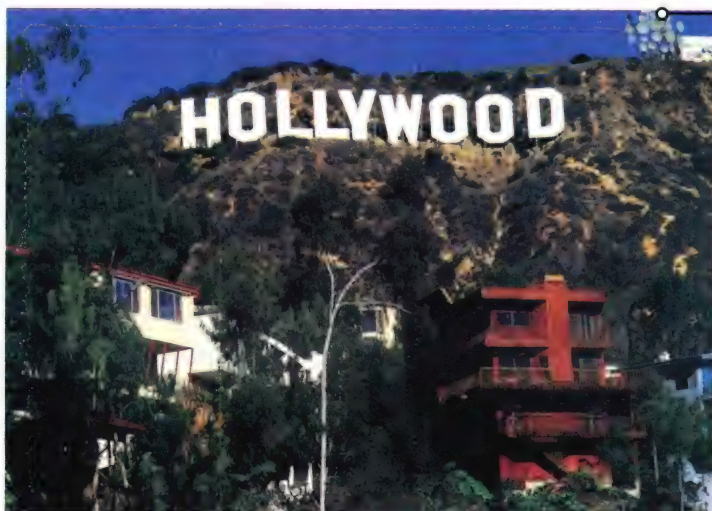
Accolade

Accolade resurrects the *HardBall* series for the fifth time, cramming everything you could ever want from a baseball game, including play-by-play commentary from Al Michaels, in one handy package titled *HardBall 5. Legends Football '97* includes all the stats from last year's American football season, but also features 'legendary' teams from 1932, 1950 and 1968. It will, apparently, have awesome gameplay, but again is one of the titles that is very limited in its appeal. *Bubsy 3D*, on the other hand, is a bit more promising, but only just. Bringing the bouncing Bobcat into the third dimension, Accolade reckons *Bubsy 3D* has "the sophisticated look of a Warner Brothers cartoon". We think, from first impressions, it looks like a poor man's *Crash Bandicoot*.



Warner Interactive

Having just released the entertaining *Return Fire*, Warner Interactive is now concentrating on *Pitball*, a futuristic arena game that best described as *Speedball* in 3D. It's a two-on-two game of skill and wits, although a healthy dose of sheer brute force also comes in handy. Up to four players can compete simultaneously with the aid of a multitap, and with twelve characters to team up with there's bound to be a warrior that matches your style. A Trash-It stress-relieving orgy of destruction in which the aim of the game is to destroy everything. Yup, as Jack Hammer, simply raze buildings to the ground using your upgradeable hammer, thwarting the plans of Doctor Moonbeam in the process. Due out at the end of the year is *Star Control 3*, a space exploration game with a hint or role-playing and hefty dash of combat. Well received on the PC, we'll bring you more news of a PlayStation port when we get it.



WELCOME TO HOLLYWOOD, HOME OF THE SILVER SCREEN. ASIDE FROM TINSLETOWN LOS ANGELES IS FAMOUS FOR MANY OTHER THINGS, LIKE GANG-LAND SHOOTINGS AND VICIOUS RIOTS. IT'S A BIT DIFFERENT FROM MARGATE THEN.

Coming soon this summer...

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS THE NEXT GENERATION



**CRASH
BANDICOOT**

**TOBAL
NO 1**

**SOUL
EDGE**

**TWISTED
METAL 2**

WORLD TOUR • 2 XTREME • SPIRAL SAGA • BROKEN SWORD • JET MOTO

Crash Bandicoot undeniably stole the limelight at the Electronic Entertainment Expo, overshadowing arch rivals Sonic the Hedgehog and Mario. The brightest star of the digital age, he looks set to shoot to stardom when he debuts on the PlayStation in the Autumn. Starring in what is essentially a platform game, it's one of the first games to really push the machine to the limit. Packing approximately thirty levels, the game is divided into three islands consisting of two types of level. Some scroll from left to right in typical platformer tradition, while others move in and out of the screen with Crash scooting along, avoiding boulders Indiana Jones-style and stomping on the enemies. Visually it surpasses everything else on the PlayStation, with convincing 3D levels that are full of colour, detail and animation. Crash himself is pretty hip too, animated smoothly and dispensing off enemies by spinning

along, Taz-style. A truly amazing showcase for the power of Sony's 32bit wonder.

Square's *Tobal No. 1* is equally impressive though, even when compared against the mighty *Tekken 2*. This is primarily because the fighting arena is actually 3D as opposed to pseudo-3D. Fighters can step into the screen as well as backing away, literally adding another dimension to the beat 'em up. With numerous characters to select and special moves to master, *Tobal's* crisp 3D graphics and brilliant light-sourcing make this one of the best looking and hopefully the most playable games of 1996.

Another two of Sony big hopes of the summer are follow-ups to the best-selling *Twisted Metal* and *ESPN Extreme Games*. *Twisted Metal 2: World Tour* takes car combat across the

Sony Computer Entertainment



UNSURPRISINGLY CRASH BANDICOOT WAS THE STAR OF THE SHOW FOR GUY PEARCE OF SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT.

globe and introduces loads of new cars to race 'n' wreck. Cruise along the streets of New York, power-slide around the icy wasteland of Antarctica or speed down the Champs Elysees and nuke the Eiffel Tower with armour piercing missiles! Just as action-packed is *2 Extreme*, the roller-blading rollercoaster ride for up to four players. The concept is basically the same as the first game, with players skating, biking and boarding across twelve new tracks. However, the game now features super-smooth motion-captured animation and a revamped power-ups including monster speed boosts, high jumps and super strength.

Sony also announced the first batch of role-playing games to appear on these shores.

Beyond the Beyond is a by-the-book RPG, with dragons, wizards and pirates all battling it out in this classic tale of good versus evil. *Arc the Lad* is similar in that it's another battle of morality, a small boy pitted against an army of monsters that are gradually devastating the world.

Luckily *Arc* is aided by six other adventurers, and can also find over sixty handy weapons and cast

around fifty different spells! Unusually for an RPG, *Arc the Lad* is a visual feast and an audio delight, with two musical scores provided by the London Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Continuing with RPGs, *Spiral Saga* is set in a sprawling dungeon filled with vicious monsters. Adventurers start with no weapons but soon stumble across swords, daggers and crossbows, and through experience can eventually learn to cast magic spells.

Stepping up a gear, *Raging Skies* is a fast-paced aerial dogfight for one or two players. Although Sony insists it's a flight simulation *Raging Skies* is more of an arcade-style shoot 'em up, with six aircraft to fly and countless enemies to bag. The missions are designed in such a way as to create a developing scenario, and with it's fast 3D graphics *Raging Skies* looks set to dominate the digital dogfights. Equally impressive is *Soul Edge*, another 3D beat 'em up from the Namco stable. With realistic polygon graphics similar to those in *Tekken 2*, *Soul Edge* features the most advanced combat system yet, with a comprehensive range of attacks and blocks, as well as the introduction of weapons such as spears and swords. Motion-capture ensures fluid realistic animation, while detailed backgrounds add the proverbial icing to this visually slick cake.

Broken Sword is a graphic adventure coded by Revolution Software, and features the talents of a top BBC script writer and also sprite animation by the creators of the cult comic *Tank Girl*. Rather than a fantasy RPG as suggested by its title, *Broken Sword* is in fact a modern day thriller set in Paris that focuses on one man's attempt to uncover the

megalomaniacal plans of an underground fascist group. Serious stuff.

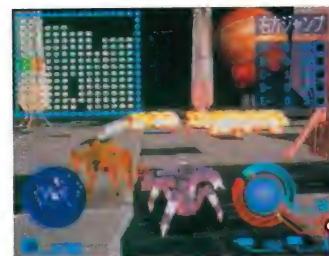
Jet Moto is a little more light-hearted, a racing game with a novel twist. Player speed around 12 different courses on jet bikes, skimming around texture-mapped circuits dogged by twenty other competitors. *Carnage Heart* is a totally different thing. It's a battle simulator that features fully animated wars in glorious 3D, between futuristic robots scrambling across desolate cityscapes. Design the mechs, create complex battle plans then lead your army to victory.

As well as continuing it's beat 'em up onslaught, Namco is adding the final touches to the third instalment of the *Museum* collections. Crammed with six classic games, veterans gamers will be able to feel the need for speed with *Pole Position 2* or go pill-popping with *Ms PACMAN*. Other games on offer are *Phozon*, *Dig Dug*, *Tower of Druaga*, and the excellent shoot 'em up *Galaxians*. *Smash Court Tennis* is another Namco title, based on the superb Super NES classic *Smash Tennis*. An arcade game rather than a true simulation, *Smash Court Tennis* will feature 24 players of varying ability, both singles and doubles options and ten different courts complete with obstacles that affect the flight of the ball.

Sony's line-up includes another two sports games, namely *MLB Pennant Race* and *NCAA Football Gamebreaker*. Simulating baseball and American football respectively, both titles offer a realistic interpretation of the real thing. The Yank will like them, then. Lastly there's *A. IV Evolution Global*, a resource management game in which players must build up a thriving rail empire. Trainspotters, look out for this one.



BEYOND THE BEYOND



CARNAGE HEART



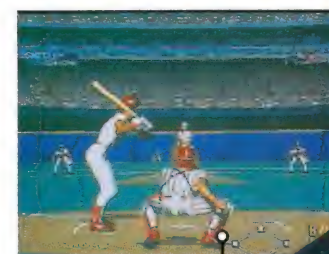
CRASH BANDICOOT



NCAA FOOTBALL GAMEBREAKER



JET MOTO



PENNANT RACE



RAGING SKIES

TWISTED METAL 2 WORLD TOUR

Now Showing Perfect Weapon • Surreal • Melt • Darknet • Incredible Idiots in space • Hardcore 4X4 • Outdoors Tournament Bass '97 • Ten Pin Alley • Colliderz

A SC is an American publisher who is now committed to the PlayStation, with nine products already in development. *Perfect Weapon* is a beat 'em up but one's that very different from the usual one-on-one fight-fest. As Commander Blake Hunter players must explore the strange moon on which he mysteriously appears, fending off the aliens that attack throughout his journey.

Surreal is a weird game, one that will challenge the way you think and will totally immerse the gamer in real-time 3D environments, while *Melt* sees the player fighting the ultimate evil, a strange energy-eating apparition called Eddie. With the length of play varying from thirty minutes to five hours, *Melt* can be played in a variety of different ways, from a frantic blaster to a more sedate game filled with puzzles.

Darknet is isometric adventure set across five unique worlds, and features a variety of comic book characters that appear during this mammoth game. With gun-slinging

action to match the puzzle solving, surfing the net will never be quite the same... You'll never think in quite the same way after playing the

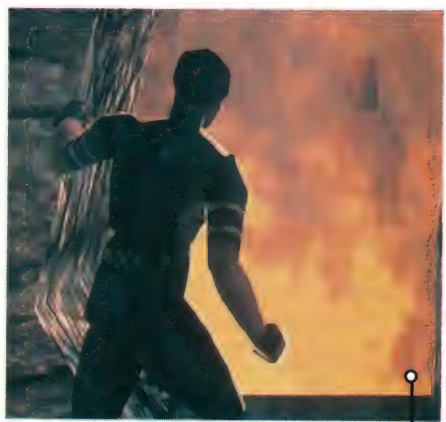
Incredible Idiots in Space either, an outrageous combination of action, adventure and corny one-liners. Cute aliens Mook and D'Bu are circumnavigating the solar system as two of the universe's most inept policeman, encountering 36 unknown species along the way. Should they let 'em go or hold them for questions? That's up to you, but whatever your decisions the result is, apparently, bound to be hilarious.

A challenger for Psygnosis' *Monster Truck Rally* is *Hardcore 4X4*, a similar pick-up truck racer that offers a selection of six courses offering different driving environments, six monster trucks that handle differently from one another and 3D terrains that mimic real-life landscapes. As for *Outdoors Bass Tournament '97*, it's yet another fishing simulation, but this one allows virtual anglers the chance to select their own tackle and even fish in realistic shorelines.

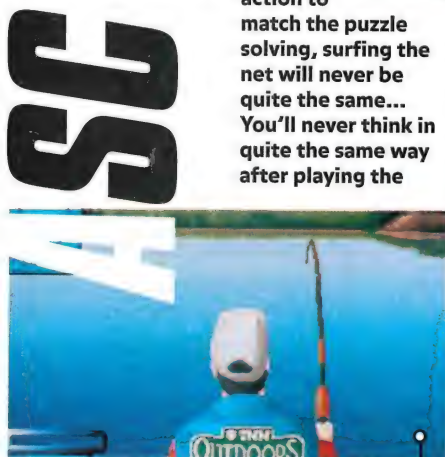
Ten Pin Alley is a bowling simulation that tackles three eras of bowling, from a Fifties-style bowling centre through to a glimpse of what ten pin bowling could be like in the year 2000. It may have polygon graphics by the bucketload, but at the end of the day it's just a game where heavy balls are thrown to know down a handful of wooden skittle. Zzzz. Hopefully *Colliderz* will be a little bit more exciting, and is a sport played between teams of well-armoured craft, bashing and shoving their opponent to get the all in the back of the cyber-net. Hmmm, sounds interesting.



DARKNET



PERFECT WEAPON



OUTDOORS BASS TOURNAMENT '97



PERFECT WEAPON



MELT



SURREAL



COLLIDERZ



HARDCORE 4X4



IDIOTS IN SPACE

Tecmo

Tecmo takes on the might of Madden with *Tecmo Superbowl*, an arcade-style American football game featuring the teams of the NFL. *Tecmo Stackers*, on the other hand, is an addictive puzzle game that puts *Tetris* to shame. Tecmo's last PlayStation project, *Super Eagle Shot Golf*, is a golf game. No surprises there then.



TECMO SUPERBOWL

Now Showing Pandemonium!, Blood Omen: The Legacy of Kain • Spider • Ghost Rider • The Punisher • 3D Baseball • Tank • Grand Theft Auto • Race and Chase

Developed by Crystal Dynamic but to be releases through BMG in the UK, *Pandemonium!* was a surprise hit at the show. An unknown product before E3, *Pandemonium!* is a platform game that's stretch-es across numerous pseudo-3D levels. While most of the stages are played by running left to right, the ingenious 'float-ing' camera gives the game an incredible sense of depth. the cool graphics are backed by complex gameplay too, and *Pandemonium!* has more than it's fair share of puzzles to solve and big boss guardians to defeat.

In *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain*, for once a vampire is the good guy. Player's pull on the cloak of blood-sucker Kain, out to seek vengeance in the gothic world of Nosgoth. To survive his quest Kain must drink the blood of his victims, first incapacitating them in hand-to-hand combat before closing in for the kill. As his strength grows, so do his powers and eventually Kain can transform into three either a bat, a wolf and, get this, mist. Could be the first game ever to cast the player as fog?

Also from Crystal Dynamics is *3D Baseball*, a 3D simulation of the sport with over 700 individuals players and around fifty actual batter stances that

replicate signature moves of the league's top players. The company's two Marvel licences look promising too, with games based on both *Ghost Rider* and the *Punisher*. *Ghost Rider* offers supersonic motorbike madness in glorious 3D while *The Punisher* goes head-to-head against low-down city scum in this first-person perspective blaster.

Appearing on the BMG label itself is *Spider*, a novel platform game in which player get to sample the (not so) good life of an arachnid. Like *Pandemonium!* it uses a pseudo-3D view give a feeling of depth, and uses the PlayStation's lighting trickery to give the sewers in which the game is set a suitably dank, dingy feel. Also on BMG's own label is *Race and Chase*, a racing game where the top speed of your sports car is the only limit. It's fast, it's 3D and it's due out during the autumn. *Grand Theft Auto* is pencilled in for a similar release date, and is apparently a racing game with a difference. Maybe it's a joyriding simulation? Lastly there's *Tank*, a top-down action game in which the virtual tank commander gets to trash cities in his metal beast. Excellent.

GHOST RIDER



3D BASEBALL



BLOOD OMEN: LEGACY OF KAIN

Empire

Empire Interactive has only just begun to get the PlayStation ball rolling, with *Fighter Attack* not due for a release until much later this year. A World War I dogfighting game, it is said to be an arcade-style blast rather than a full-on simulation, so don't expect hyper-accurate flight dynamic from the Red Baron's Fokker. Empire also plans to release a golf game on the PlayStation, but an exact title and game details have yet to be announced.



SCI

SCI is still working on a pair of PlayStation games, namely *Gender Wars* and *XS*. *Gender Wars* is a Syndicate-style battle between man and woman while *XS* is a monster blast with super-cool graphics. Hopefully we'll be pre-viewing both in the very near future.



SNK

SNK, masters of the beat 'em up on the Neo Geo, plans to release three titles on to the PlayStation. All three are straight conversions of the original games, and in the near future *Samurai Shodown III*, *King of Fighters* and *Real Bout Fatal Fury* will all be debuting on Sony's machine. They'll have to be damn good conversions if they're to stand up against *Street Fighter Alpha*, though.

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Now Showing HyperBlade • Interstate '76 • Blast Chamber • Pitfall 3D • Zork: Nemesis.

Activision's PlayStation debut will be *HyperBlade*, a cybersport played by two teams of three players, skating along a 3D half-pipe drome arena. Combining elements of hockey, lacrosse and roller ball, it's a full-contact sport with just one rule – score a goal anyway you can, cracking your opponent's nose or snapping their neck just to get hold of the ball.

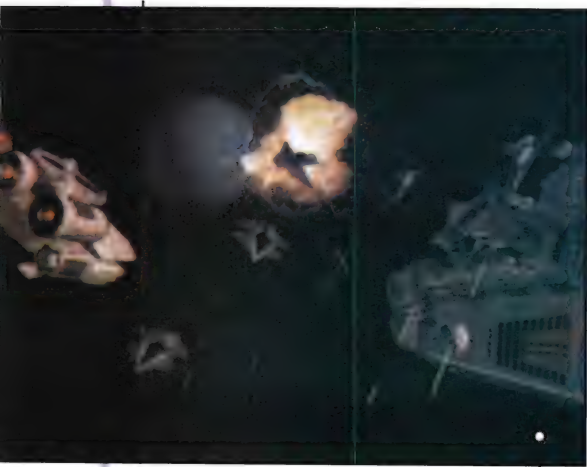
Interstate '76 is Activision's bid for pole position in the racing stakes, but rather than opting for a futuristic racer it's gone retro. From behind the wheel of one 25 classic Seventies muscle cars players must cruise the highways of the USA, gunning down the auto-terrorists that plague the tarmac trails. Sure, it sounds like an out-

Activision



Trimark

Trimark Interactive was proud to show off *The Hive*, a space-y adventure packed with loads of cool visuals. Unfortunately they weren't so keen to give specific details of the game, so we'll have to wait until the game is released in the autumn for a precise idea of what the game is about. Damn.



THE HIVE

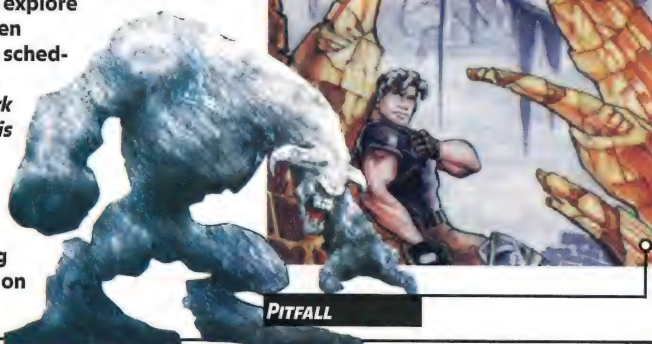


BLAST CHAMBER

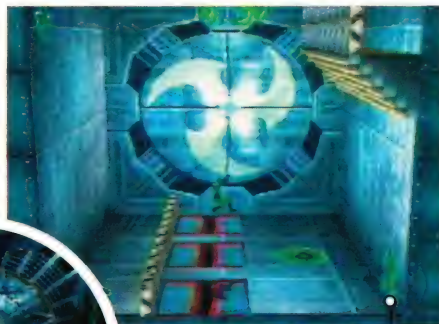
take from *Mad Max* but when you're speeding full-throttle with funk classics blaring from the radio, Mel Gibson is the last bloke you'd expect to see.

Blast Chamber is a maze game for up to four players, each desperately exploring the network of tunnels in search of the crystal that de-activates the time-bomb strapped to their chest. Get to the gem first and watch smugly as your opponent's are splattered across the level, but take too long and it's your entrails the cyber-janitor will be mopping up off the floor.

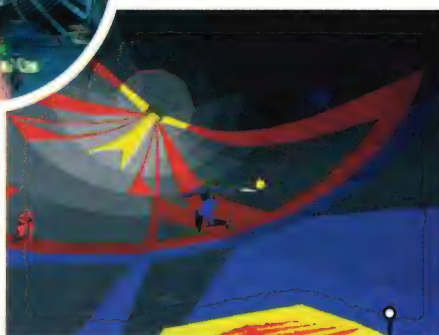
Activision's remaining two titles will be familiar to veteran gamers. *Pitfall* is a Nineties update of the old Atari VCS platformer, but forget the side-scrolling 'classic' of old because PlayStation *Pitfall* is a 3D extravaganza. With full texture-mapping and polygon characters, there's 15 non-linear world to explore and numerous hidden stages to find. Also scheduled for a release is the latest in the *Zork* series. *Zork: Nemesis* combines live-action footage with a storyline, making it one of the most engrossing graphic adventures on the PlayStation.



PITFALL



BLAST CHAMBER



HYPER BLADE



INTERSTATE '76



ZORK: NEMESIS



Now Showing Rock 'n' Roll Racing II • Armed • Tempest • Shattered Steel • Wild 9s

Conterplay's *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II* is a far cry from the acclaimed isometric original that appeared on the Super NES, as it's been given a 3D makeover to bring it up into the next generation. Boasting complete rendered graphics, 12 circuits and bundles of weapons to collect, *Rock 'n' Roll Racing II* could well be a racer to look out for, but it'll have to be something pretty special to beat *WipEout 2097* to the post.

Armed is a side-scrolling shoot 'em up that boasts both adrenalin-rush action and brain-teasing puzzles. As Vic, the aim of the game is to battle through a total of 12 rendered levels, each infested with weird aliens but the toughest challenge of all comes from the special forces agent who's out to eliminate his fellow soldiers, namely you!

Wild 9s is Shiny Entertainment's latest project, a platform game but a far cry from the developer's well-known *Earthworm Jim*. Shiny has developed a free-roving camera that pans around the main character in the game, automatically zooming in and out to keep the action in the centre of the screen. Even though it's a long way from completion the early demo gave a rough impression of what the final game will be like, and very good it is too. Let's just hope the gameplay matches the graphics. *Tempest X* and *Shattered Steel* are Interplay's other two '96 titles, both of which are shoot 'em ups crammed with enemies to destroy and goodies to collect. They're not due out until much later in the year though, so expect more information on these hot releases during the autumn.



ALLISON GRANT FROM INTERPLAY IS CHUFFED TO HAVE PLATFORMER SUPERMOES SHINY ENTERTAINMENT UNDER THE INTERPLAY LABEL.



ARMED



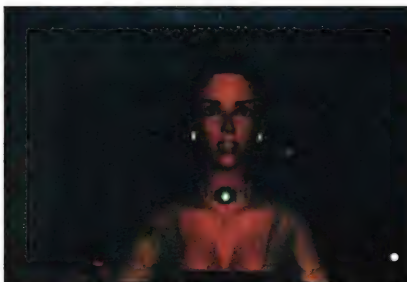
ROCK 'N' ROLL RACING 2



SHATTERED STEEL

Koei

Originally appearing on the Super NES, *Romance of the 3 Kingdom* will shortly be coming out on Sony's 32bit machine. It's a strategy game based in ancient china, in a time when committing hara-kiri was more noble than losing a battle. Stupid gits. *Mystery of the Seven Mansions* is a graphic adventure, and features just over half a dozen large houses. Seven to be precise.



MYSTERY OF THE SEVEN MANSIONS

Vic Tokai

Originally released on the PC by Cambridge-based developer Millennium, *Silverload* will shortly be available on PlayStation thanks to Vic Tokai. A western thriller cum horror adventure, enter a deserted cowboy town to uncover the mystery on the unknown killer.



GTE

The result of a collaboration between French developer Cryo and Dark Horse Comics, *Hard Boiled* is a super-fast 3D arcade game set in the dank sewers from the comic book. Choose from three autoplanes before skimming off in search of the megalomaniac Willeford, blasting him with a vast array of high-powered weaponry.



Rocket Science

Rocket Science, a relatively unknown developer on the PlayStation, has two new product due for release before the end of the year. *Ganymede* is a space combat simulation, packed with over 20 missions based on the craterous surface of one of Jupiter's icy moons. *Rocket Jockey* is a modern-day chariot race, with battle-suited gladiators skimming around the circuits on the back of a jet bike. At it's best in the multi-player mode, use the bike's array of cable hooks to power around the corners or use them to dismount the other riders!



Interplay



Psygnosis proudly presents...

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

Also starring *WipEout 2097* • *Discworld II* • *Monster Truck Rally* • *Tenka* • *City of Lost Children* • *Athamor* • *Deadline* • *The Fallen* • *Sentient* • *The Adventures of Lomax in Lemmingland*

Having ditched its Sony epithet in favour of its original monicker, Psygnosis is currently in the post-production stage of its two super-sequels, *Destruction Derby 2* and *WipeOut 2097*. Previewed on Page 38, *WipeOut 2097* is a natural progression of the first game with more circuits, vehicles and weapons to play around with. *Destruction Derby 2*, on the other hand, is a completely new game. Compared to the original it's bigger in virtually every way – the courses are longer, the track is wider, there are new cars to drive and even more obstacles to avoid. The 3D engine has also been improved, optimising the game's speed which also allows for many banked curves, lots of hills and jumps.

Remaining on the motor sport circuit, *Monster Truck Rally* maybe a far cry from stock car racing but it's got all the shunts 'n' slams of *Destruction Derby*. Climbing inside an oversized pick-up truck, either crush cars in the arena bowl or venture out into the wilderness for the time trials. Developed by the team responsible for *Destruction Derby*, *Monster Truck Rally* boasts realistic 3D landscapes complete with undulating hills and detailed texture-maps, and also has some smart visual effects such as lens flare. Better still, the truck has been accurately modelled and therefore handles exactly like the real thing, sliding realistically and even toppling over when scrambling up those steep hills.

As well as dominating the racing circuit, Psygnosis plans to once again blitz the adventure scene with the funny follow-up, *Discworld II: Missing Presumed...!??* Based on Pratchett's best-selling novels but not actually penned by the author himself, *Discworld II* follows Rincewind as he desperately tries to convince Death his ghastly grim-reaping duties are more exciting than



WITH F1, WIPEOUT 2097 AND DESTRUCTION DERBY 2 TO CHOOSE FROM, PSYGNOSIS' GLEN O'CONNELL IS SPOILT FOR CHOICE.

drinking beer on a sun-bleached beach. Naturally it's filled with quick one-liners and gags aplenty, but coding team Perfect Entertainment has honed the game engine to cut down on endless walking between locations and dull conversations.

The Island of Dr Moreau is another adventure from the Liverpoolian publishers, but uses real-time 3D graphics rather than cartoon-style animation. The result is

game that looks superb, with cool rendered cutscenes featuring real actors. More exciting is the plot, a compelling journey through the mind of HG Wells to realm plagued by blood-sucking beasts. Ergh.

The City of Lost Children is a little less gory but is engrossing nonetheless. An *Alone in the Dark* style arcade adventure, the game follows the plight of a ten-year-old orphan plunged into a world full of weird puzzles and riddles. Where is she? Who knows, but *The City of Lost Children*'s slick 3D characters and pre-rendered graphic ensure this game has style and beauty as well as substance.

Athanor dips into cyber-space to whisk the player through virtual world inspired by Greek mythology. A smart-looking

graphic adventure crammed with combat scenes against vicious monsters such as the Minotaur and Hydra, there's also loads of puzzles to solve making *Athanor* a healthy balance of game-

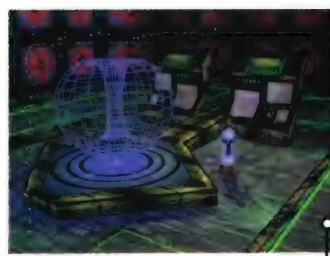
SENTIENT

play and graphics. *The Fallen*, yet another adventure, is set in cyberpunk America where two rival corporations rule coast to coast. Entering the ranks of either side, there's a massive 3D environment to explore, as well as weapons to pick up and vehicles to drive. *Alphastorm* looks to be just as versatile too, combining absorbing first-person action sections with challenging strategy scenes. It's futuristic setting perfectly matches the glossy rendered graphics, with space pirates swarming through meteor showers in glorious 3D!

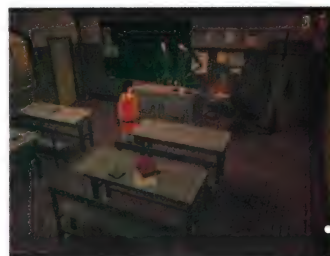
Back to reality, *Deadline* is a strategy game that focuses on the SAS. Controlling a team of special agents, the aim of this isometric action game is to eliminate the terrorists while keeping hostage casualties to a minimum. *Tenka*, on the other hand, is a game of mass genocide. It's a strategy-based first-person perspective blaster that's more akin to *Alien Trilogy* than *Doom*, but is still and a fast-paced

blast stuffed with action. *Sentient* isn't quite as furious, but then role-playing games aren't supposed to be frantic. Still, it is a massive game, stretched right across a 12-level space craft filled with over 200 highly detailed rooms to explore.

Psygnosis two remaining titles, *Rodney Matthews* and *The Adventures of Lomax in Lemmingland*, mark a step back in time for the company. Why? Many of Psygnosis' early games, including *Barbarian* and *Obliterator*, featured cover artwork by famed fantasy illustrator Rodney Matthews, and scheduled for a release at the end of the year is a game based on his artwork. Details are sketchy at the moment, although it's said to be an action adventure. Hmm. *The Adventures of Lomax in Lemmingland* celebrates the return of those lovable rodents, but this time it's a cutesy platform romp as opposed to a mind-bending puzzler. As well as intricate level design, unique features include the ability to move in and out of the screen and a two-player mode for unparalleled ledge-leaping fun. Just try not to throw yourself off any cliffs!



ATHANOR



CITY OF LOST CHILDREN



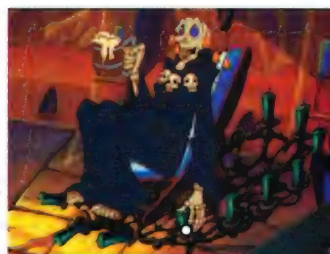
DEADLINE



DESTRUCTION DERBY 2



LOMAX IN LEMMINGLAND



DISC WORLD II

Psygnosis



Now Showing Tomb Raider • Dream Team Basketball • The Incredible Hulk • Swagman

Now distributing product for US Gold, Domark and Core Design, Eidos has some decent games in it's late '96 line-up. *Tomb Raider* certainly looks very impressive, the 3D world in which the game is set being both realistic and moving smoothly. The animation on the character is slick too, the female thief running, jumping and swimming with surprising realism. As well as the exploration of desolate tombs, players must keep up their guard in case one of the many beasts attack, from vicious guard dogs to ambling killer bears.

The remaining three titles are still some way off completion, although *Swagman* should impress with it's cutesy graphics and playable game-play. *The Incredible Hulk 2* is a far cry from the abomination that appeared on the 16bit consoles, and US Gold is all-too keen to stress it will be a totally different game from the original. It's looks like they could be right too, as there's already an inkling of gameplay even at this early stage. Lastly there's *Dream Team Basketball*, a desperate attempt to nab the basketball crown from the current holders, Konami and Sony, for *NBA In the Zone* and *Total NBA* respectively.



TOMBRAIDERS



TOMBRAIDERS



TOMBRAIDERS

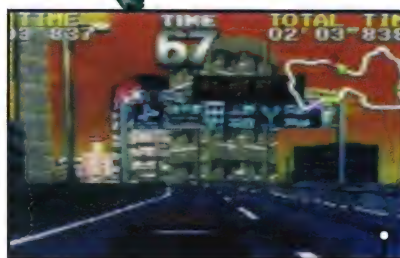


SWAGMAN



Jaleco

Although Jaleco has three PlayStation in development, very little is actually known about them as yet. *DreamKnight* is apparently an adventure game, *Tokyo Highway Battle* is a high-speed racer and *Slam Dragon* will be a fighting game. Unfortunately that's all there is to know at the moment.



TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE

Codemasters

Micro Machines v3 was the only game Codemasters had on show, but very impressive it was all the same. Taking the essence of the best-selling 16bit *Micro Machines* games and giving them the 3D treatment, the series now looks and plays better than ever before.



American Laser Games

Burning Sword is a fighting game from American Laser Games, in which axe-wielding warriors takes on all sorts of weird and wonderful creatures including a green-skinned lizard who's darting tongue can be lethal.



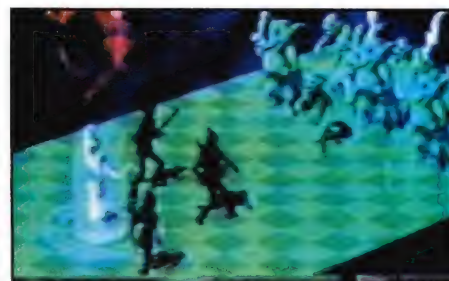
American Technos

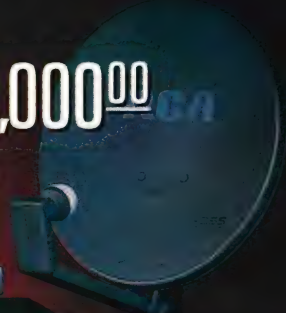
In *Strikepoint*, fly an Apache Gunship across detailed texture-mapped terrain in this aerial shoot 'em up from American Technos. Apart from looking pretty damn smart, further details have yet to be released.



Atlus

The award for weirdest game name ever goes to Atlus, who has announced the imminent release of *Megami Tensei: Persona* on the PlayStation. Rather predictably it's a role-playing game, and one that features loads of mystical creatures and functional isometric viewpoint. Yowsers.





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CLIFF AND WALL

VIRGIN INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT
PRESENTS



Introducing *Command & Conquer*, *Spot* goes to Hollywood, *Manotek Warrior*, *Skeleton Warriors*, *Grid Runner*, *Lands of Lore: Guardians of Destiny*, *The 11th Hour*, *Clandestiny*

It's been a long time in the making, but *Amazing Studio's Heart of Darkness* is finally due for release this Autumn. Plucky teenager Andy must journey through his worst nightmares to save pet dog Whiskey, zapping weird ghouls and ghosts with a home-made laser blaster and eventually coming face-to-face with evil super-git, The Master. Visually *Heart of Darkness* is far beyond anything else on the PlayStation, boasting cartoon animation comparable to that of a Disney movie. Along with seven levels of rendered heaven, *Amazing's* impressive debut promises to set a staggering standard by which all other platformers will be judged.

Having already proved its mettle on the PC, *Command & Conquer* finally trundles out on the PlayStation. A supremely addictive arcade strategy game, the player captains small units of

infantry across a variety of levels, from dense forest land to open deserts. By gradually building up the army's resources more powerful units can be constructed, including scout buggies, battle tanks and attack 'copters. Simple but engrossing gameplay is matched by detailed graphics and a pounding soundtrack, making *Command & Conquer* one of the hottest properties of '96.

Equally exciting is *Nanotek Warrior*, an arcade action game set in the distant 23rd Century. Servant Nano-robots have blown their obedience chips, turning on their creators and threatening the existence of mankind. As chief of the NanoTek ship there's no other option but to eliminate the droids across ten levels of manic blasting, grabbing assorted weapons and power-ups along the way.

Meaty guns also feature heavily in *Grid Runner*, a hyper-speed blast for one or two players. Dumped in the middle of some 48 sprawling virtual



IN DEVELOPMENT FOR YEARS, HEART OF DARKNESS IS STILL FAVOURED BY VIRGIN'S DOUG JOHNS.

mazes, *Grid Runners* must hunt each other down and use a combination of weaponry and spells to eliminate their opponent.

Spot Goes to Hollywood sees the return of Virgin's dotty star in a neat 3D platform romp — as seen way back in Issue 1!

Themed around some of Tinsel Town's greatest movies, this arcade monster sees Spot tackling everything from sabre-swinging pirates to alien invaders, across twenty puzzle-filled levels of non-stop ledge-leaping. Over twenty minutes of rendered cutscenes detail Spot's progress through the game, and add atmosphere to this non-stop rollercoaster ride of lights, camera and action.

Yet another sequel appears in the form of *Black Dawn*, the follow-up to the playable PlayStation shooter *Agile Warrior*. Piloting a nifty combat helicopter through a whopping 28 levels, wannabe Mavericks must battle jet aircraft over the streets of the Big Apple and rescue hostages from life-or-death situation, calling upon the help of a buddy in the excellent two-player co-operative mode.

Boasting a refined 3D engine and numerous combat views, *Black Dawn* combines slick graphics with pulsing gameplay.

11th Hour, on the other hand, is much more sedate. The sequel to the award-winning *7th Guest*, *11th Hour* takes this horror series to the next levels as Carl Denning return to the quiet town of Harley to investigate the mysterious disappear of his lover. Combining some ingenious puzzles with graphic video footage, *11th Hour's* compelling storyline may be gory but even the queasiest of gamers will be begging for more.

Although it's title sounds scary, *Skeleton Warriors* is game that even

kid will enjoy. It's a beat 'em up that pits a stereotypical muscle-bound meathead against the undead hordes, hacking his way through the bony gits with the various weapons scattered through the quest. The version on show was practically complete, so expect a full review in the very near future.

Virgin's obligatory baseball game is titled *Grandslam '96*, and like many of the other sports sims due for an imminent release, it will offer "the most realistic baseball experience ever". Maybe, but do we Brits really care? *Lands of Lore: Guardians of Destiny* looks much more appealing, and is the sequel to the PC original from Westwood Studios. The Las Vegas-based team worked for months creating the game's stunning 3D graphics, combining them with a enthralling storyline and gripping role-playing gameplay. Set in massive, often mysterious lands plagued by monsters with frightening artificial intelligence, this is a game-playing epic that will entertain for months.

If you're after a game that's not quite so overwhelming, look no further than *Golden Nugget*, a casino simulator that includes live-action tutorials from ol' Batman himself, Adam West. Boasting 14 Las Vegas-style games, *Golden Nugget* boasts all the fun of the real thing, you just don't get to keep the winnings.

Last on Virgin's summer schedule is *Clandestiny*. Designed by Trilobyte, the team responsible for *11th Hour* and *7th Guest*, *Clandestiny* adopt a similar approach by combining horror story with challenging puzzles. However, the cartoon-style graphics give it a decidedly light-hearted feel, and combined with the humorous script and visual gags, *Clandestiny* will have you crying with laughter and shrieking with fright at the same time!

SPOT GOES TO HOLLYWOOD



BLACK DAWN



GOLDEN NUGGET



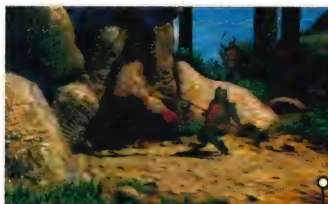
GRAND SLAM '96



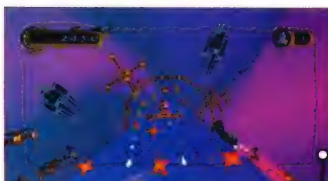
GRIDRUNNER



HEART OF DARKNESS



LANDS OF LORE



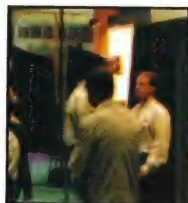
NANOTEK WARRIORS

Now Showing *Star Trek: Generations* • *Vette: San Francisco Thrills* • *X-COM: Terror from the Deep*

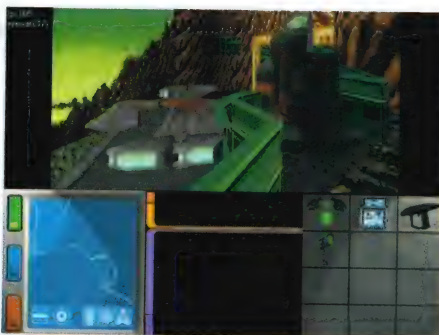
Although MicroProse had very little to show at E3, the quality of product present was very good. *Star Trek: Generations* is based on the naff movie in which Captains Picard and Kirk finally meet, with rather disappointing results, it must be said. The game looks considerably better than the movie though, and combines starship combat sequences with first-person exploration sections. Undeniably a must for Trekkers.

Vette: San Francisco Thrills is a racing game developed in America by Spectrum Holobyte, and as such not even MicroProse's knows much about the product. Apparently it will be more of a simulation-style racer rather than a *Ridge Racer* clone, though.

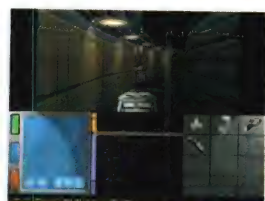
X-COM: Terror from the Deep will undoubtedly continue the success of the first *X-COM* game, *Enemy Unknown*, even though it's very similar game, albeit set under the murky depths of the ocean. However, because the game is pretty much the same it will be just as playable and equally as absorbing. Hoorah!



EVEN THOUGH THE FILM WAS NAFF, JASON DUTTON FROM MICROPROSE HAS EVERY FAITH IN *STAR TREK: GENERATIONS*. IT LOOKS A DAMN SIGHT BETTER THAN THE MOVIE. PHEW.



STAR TREK: GENERATIONS



STAR TREK: GENERATIONS



VETTE: SAN FRANCISCO THRILLS



POSTCARDS FROM THE EDGE. LOS ANGELES LOOKS GREAT HERE, YES? THEY DON'T SHOW THE DRIVE-BY GUNNINGS.



MicroProse

Bandai

Kids will go crazy for Bandai's *Power Ranger Zeo Power Pinball*, a pinny game starring those Mighty Morphin' supergeeks. Although the tables look decent enough, the very subject matter is surely enough to put anyone off.



CAPS

American developer CAPS is working on two PlayStation titles, the first to be released being *Sirens*. A side-scrolling shooter, *Sirens* combines frantic action with dark, atmospheric presentation. *Extreme Dreams* is a brighter game in every sense, and is a sort of alien Olympics in which green-skinned athletes compete in events like hover boarding!



WAS IT WORTH IT?

In one word, yes. Flying thousands of miles to see a couple of new video games is a bit excessive but when there are over 200 new PlayStation game unveiled, there's no doubt as to the importance of E3. Better still, the general quality of software was high, with some extremely impressive games due out between now and the end of the year. Personal highlights include *WipeOut 2097*, with it's improved graphics and enhanced playability. *Contra* also looked good, along with Capcom's excellent beat 'em up. There was a disappointing lack of peripherals though, with joypads proving extremely scarce and the infamous Video-CD add-on nowhere in sight. But for all these new games there was one PlayStation highlight - *Crash Bandicoot*, definitely a star in the making.

Alex Simmons



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5. **WORMS (OCEAN)**
6. **TOTAL NBA 96 (SONY)**
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Five winners receive: *Highlander, 1,000,000 Years BC, Salem's lot/Return To Salem's Lot, The Outer Limits.*

Steven Sinclair, Kirkcaldy, Fife.
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BEYOND VISION

Two winners receive: Volumes 1-8 *Babylon 5*.
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Two winners receive: a memory card and solution book.
Rachael Lewis, Lewisham
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Five winners receive: a copy of *Smeg Outs* video.
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One winner receives: 28" Toshiba Dolby Surround Sound Nicam Television.
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One winner receives: a Sony Widescreen television and copies of *Loaded, Actua Soccer* and *Actua Golf*.
Matthew Feek, Bognor Regis, West Sussex.
Five winners receive: Copies of *Loaded, Actua Soccer* and *Actua Golf*.

Marc Copeland, Hamilton.
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Darren Thomas, Preston, Lancs.
David Thompson, Sale, Cheshire.
David Sim, Laurencekirk, Scotland.

MANGA

Five winners receive copies of *Giant Robo Pt2* and *Goshogun*.
Luke Hakes, Hull.
P Stonham, Hastings, East Sussex.
Daniel Moss, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne.
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Ben Cheung, Beckton, E6.

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Five winners receive: an AsciiPad joypad.
Peter Nelis, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.
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Stephen Melling, Skelmersdale.
Mark Horne, Preston, Lancs

CUBIC STEREO SYSTEM

One winner receives: a Sony cubic stereo system.
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Andrew Dewar, Torry, Aberdeen.
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Five winners receive: a copy of *Actua Soccer*.
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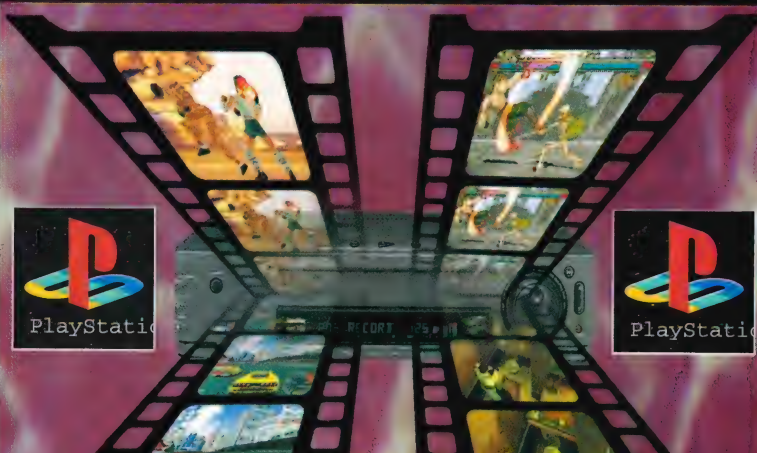


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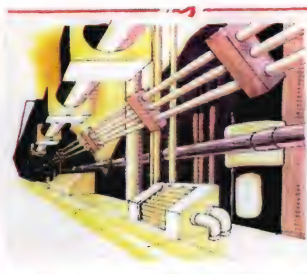
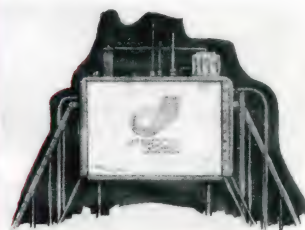
Adrenaline Overload

On the 29th of September 1995, the Sony PlayStation saw its European launch. By Christmas of the same year, over fifty percent of PlayStation owners had bought themselves a copy of the stunning Psygnosis game, Wipeout. By the end of March 1996, European sales of the game had reached the 250,000 unit mark. It's arguably the title that launched the machine, and now Psygnosis are ready to reveal the amazing sequel — Wipeout 2097. Matt Broughton travels to Liverpool and off into the future...

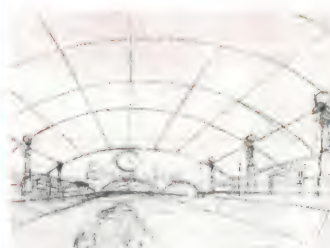


AND NOW IT'S TIME TO LOOK AT YOUR WORK

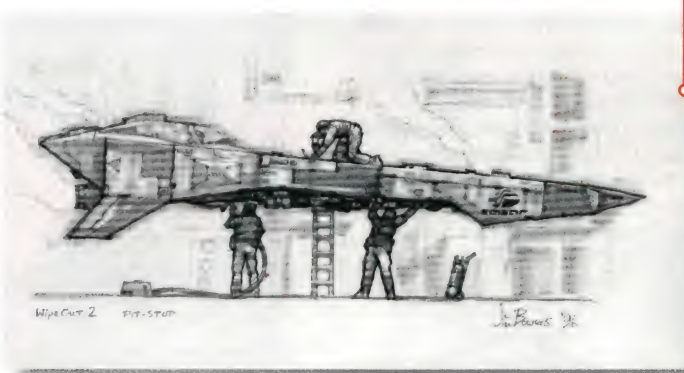
I'm not going to keep going on about how every detail has been painstakingly fiddled with before arriving on your screen (er... although I guess I just have) but here are a few of the marvellous pre-production sketches and plans for screens and features to be found in *WipEout 2097*.



EVEN THE SLIGHTEST OF INCIDENTAL GRAPHICS WERE PLANNED OUT IN EXTREME DETAIL.



CONSIDERING HOW GROOVY THE PRELIMINARY SKETCHES ARE, WAIT FOR THE RENDERED BEAUTIES!



ew games can have had the impact that *WipEout* had. Every magazine feature, and radio and television report used it as the main image for anything PlayStation related. Today it remains one of the most successful PlayStation games released so far. And, unsurprisingly, we're in for a bit of a sequel.

WipEout 2097 (known as *WipEout XL* in the States) sees the scenario move forward some forty years, where the craft have improved, the opponents have become even more deadly and cunning, and the weapons have gone from the frightening impressive to the sublime.

While the AI code is all-new, and the collision code has been completely revamped, the main 3D-shifting engine is the same as seen in the original *WipEout* — albeit with some optimised tweaking and tons of new bits thrown in for good measure. As they say, why fix what ain't broke?

DIFFERENT CLASSES

While the first *WipEout* game was often accused of being too tough (by Vimto-drinking weak-ankled cry-babies, I'm sure!) the producers of *WipEout 2097* hope to avoid such 'user-unfriendliness' accusations by introducing a more progressive learning curve. There will now be three classes — Vector, Venom and Rapier — as well as a hidden class that will remain unnamed for the moment. You know — hush hush, etc. However, while the Vector class tracks are designed for the beginner to get warmed up on (playing at a slower speed and being a less tricky track layout) the player can return to these tracks at a later point and replay the tracks at the speed of, say, the Rapier class. "If we'd allowed players to go to the higher levels from the word go," explains *WipEout 2097*'s producer, Andrew Satterthwaite, "Mr Beginner would head straight for it and then go, 'that's crap and unplayable'. We ourselves tend to only play it at the higher

speeds, but there's no harm in forcing people to play through the game from a slower pace to ease them into the game."

FAKE PLASTIC INTELLIGENCE

If there's one thing the original *WipEout* game was legendary for, it was the incredibly vicious CPU drivers. Apart from having the uncanny ability to roll out of an explosion right into your flight path, they also presented a huge obstacle as far as overtaking went. The artificial intelligence has been tweaked for *WipEout 2097*, with the drivers now being more concerned about racing the perfect line and finishing first. They will, of course, react

THE DETAIL ON SOME OF THE 3D RENDERING IS QUITE BREATHTAKING. NO EXPENSE HAS BEEN SPARED!



THE BRAND NEW PLASMA TRAILS HAVE A DRAMATIC VISUAL IMPACT...



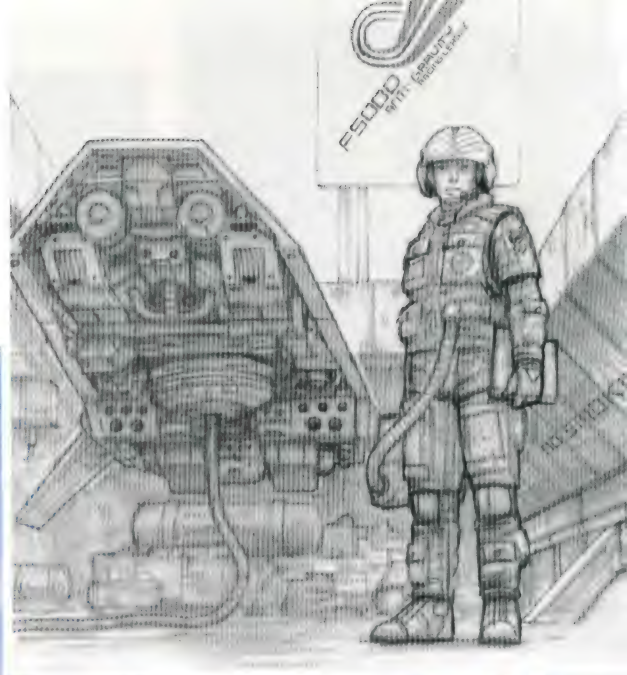
THEY ARE EVEN MORE IMPRESSIVE DURING THE NIGHT LEVELS...



AND AS FOR THE TUNNELS! PRETTY DAMN FUNKY, I THINK YOU'LL AGREE.

TAKE HART

Every detail in *Wipeout 2097* has been carefully considered and refined to produce the best possible end result. Even the static illustration shots start out as simple plans, eventually evolving into detailed sketches and, finally, the gorgeous renders we've come to know and love. Oh look, here's one now...



to your presence — and if you get in *their* way they'll do everything they can to overtake you — but they're there for their own purposes rather than just to slow your progress. If you get in their way enough, they'll start to get nasty and barge you, but if they can get past without incident, they will. The truth is that they'd rather beat you in a skilful race than waste precious seconds (and precious collision energy) firing off every single weapon they can find.

"We don't want you to be racing with tons of craft around you," explains Andrew, "because having too many nearby just gets too frustrating. The enemy craft are therefore spread out in different skill ratings so that you won't even encounter the main pack until halfway round the first circuit, and to get up to the race leader you need to display some pretty impressive flying skill up until the last stages of the race. This part of the design is still going in, but we hope to avoid the 'flying-on-your-own-for-ages' that often occurred in *Wipeout*."

Apart from the fact that there



THOUGH YOU'RE MOVING AT YOUR TOP SPEED, THE BLUE TRAIL LETS YOU KNOW THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE FASTER!



HAPPINESS IS... SITTING BACK AND WATCHING AS YOUR GLORIOUS WEAPONS SCREAM OFF INTO THE DISTANCE, FOLLOWED BY THE SATISFYING SOUND OF AN ENEMY VEHICLE BITING THE DUST.



COMING UP TO A CHECKPOINT WITH TIME TO KILL. THAT'S THE WAY!

are many more enemy craft on the track, the artificial intelligence is also being geared towards making sure that there's always someone near you, whether they be chasing from behind or ahead in the distance.

N R G EXTREME Probably one of the most radical new additions to the *Wipeout* formula for *Wipeout 2097* is the inclusion of energy levels for each craft. Get shot and — as well as losing those precious seconds of control — your energy meter drops. Smack into a wall at 400mph (and let's be honest, we've all done it) and the energy meter drops. Manage to lose all your energy and it's RIP time and one life lost. This not only adds an element of strategy to the

allows the player to truly vent his anger; not only crippling enemy ships, but being able to completely destroy them.

"The main reason behind including the energy level," explains Andrew, "was to blow people up! Once you've blown them up, that's it, they're out. You could *technically* get first place by killing everybody (and we did it yesterday by making every weapon an Energy Bomb!) but I don't think anybody will ever realistically do that." As an added incentive to the killing, you even get a tally for your kills after the race!

AWESOME GRAPHICAL CAPABILITIES

While the first *Wipeout* game was breathtaking to watch, it's nothing compared to the amazing visuals in *Wipeout 2097*. Though none of the screen shots on these pages will even vaguely

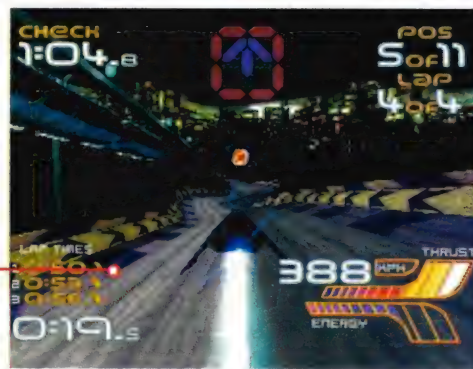
do the game any justice, you can see that the textures and lighting effects have come on in great leaps and bounds. The best comparison I can make is to think about how the photon torpedoes looked in the *Star Trek* films. That's what the missiles look like. Cool, huh?

I ask Andrew why the effects are so much better given that this is exactly the same machine the first *Wipeout* appeared on.

"Basically, people have just got much better at understanding the machine and programming it. From the three PlayStation programmers we've got now, only one was on the original *Wipeout* team and I think the new blood has helped. The first *Wipeout* had four programmers and a million artists. *Wipeout 2097* has three programmers on the PlayStation

version and one on the Windows '95 version. As far as artists go, we've currently got four working on tracks, two working on the intro movie, and four others doing incidentals like menu graphics, explosion, track textures, etc, which in total makes, er... far too many!"

Considering how dramatic and impressive effects such as the 'wet towel' weapon are [and I can only remember seeing anything like it in Gremlin's *Loaded*], why aren't we seeing more of this sort of graphical nicety? "Well it's because we're good!" exclaims Andrew. "If you can think of something and have the

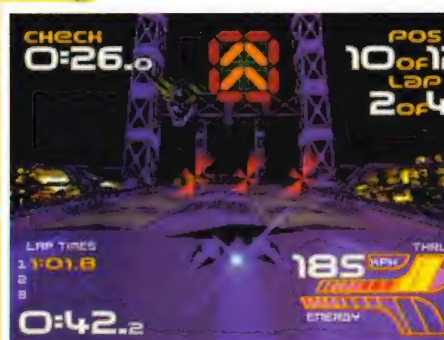


ALL THE STOMACH-CHURNING DROPS OF THE ORIGINAL ARE TO BE FOUND IN 2097.

CONTINUED OVER

SHIP SHAPES

All of the ships in *WipEout 2097* are completely new designs. Andrew explains the logic: "We thought, okay, we're forty years on from *WipEout* — what have they done to the ships? Obviously the engine trails are a new factor, so the storyline will reflect that the technology has been modified." These craft react in exactly the same way to the 3D engine as the craft did in *WipEout*, but Andrew reckons that should there ever be a *WipEout 3* (and no, there aren't any plans to do one yet — but if there were...) then they'd probably look at a complete rewrite. Yikes.



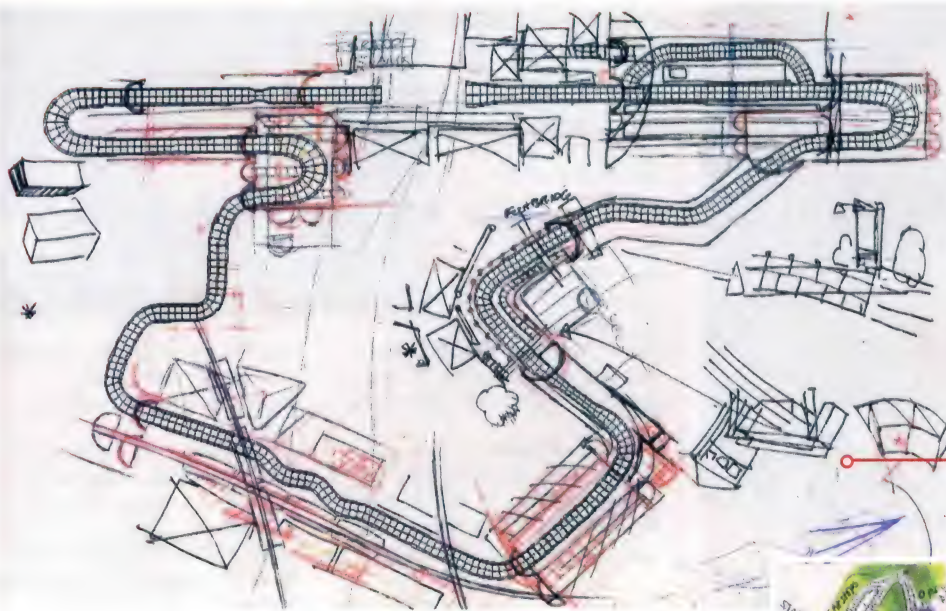
BLUE BLUE, ELECTRIC BLUE. YES, PLANET EARTH IS BLUE, AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.

skills to make it real, you put it in. We're quite sure that once we release this we'll be seeing many more racing games that use this effect."

The difficult thing when programming a machine such as the PlayStation is getting the balance right between visuals and gameplay. It's easy to be distracted by the stunning graphics available, and forget that it still needs to be a stunning game. "When you start with a brilliant game," reckons Andrew, "it's more a case of fitting in as many beautiful visuals as possible without slowing down the game. Put simply, if you can get away with it, do it. The balance is really a fight between ideas, memory and speed. The PlayStation has lovely graphics and you can do what you want, but if you want it at one frame per second, that's up to you! This is the thing

that happened with *Loaded* — big lovely explosions and effects, but it didn't half 'frame out'. In a racing game, you just can't afford that happening. The first *WipEout* 'framed out' occasionally if you had your shields on and there were a few ships in front of you, but we've managed to avoid that with *WipEout 2097*. PAL owners will definitely have nothing to worry about, because we develop everything on the NTSC, and if you can sort out your problems at 60hz you'll be okay at 50hz.

"The speed factor is a problem, but it's really up to the programmer to make the most of it. I think it's perhaps the thing the PC got right from the beginning in that, because there are so many possible configurations, you have to code product to work on umpteen different speeds. With the consoles you know it's going to run at that speed, and because you develop everything on NTSC it's then a matter of, 'oh God, now we've got to do a PAL version'. We considered this from the very start with *WipEout 2097*, and by week three were already work-



LOOK EVERYBODY, A SKETCH OF A TRACK THAT'S YET TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THE COMPUTER. AND THAT'S NOT ALL...

SEE? ANOTHER SKETCH OF A TRACK, ONLY THIS TIME A MIGHT LARGER ON THE PAGE. PLAYSTATION PLUS IN EFFECT. IF YOU WILL.

Each of the eight tracks in *Wipeout 2097* started life as a crude sketch on paper. An entire month was spent just scribbling ideas, and from an initial twenty different hand-drawn tracks, the best eight were plucked out and given to an artist who then scanned the images to be used as background templates. From these images a piece of software, called SoftImage, was used to create an accurate track spine. The next stage involved the artist taking a three-sided cross section of the track and making an animation that followed the curve of the newly created track spine, tilting and elevating where necessary. The resulting track segments were then sequentially connected and a full track model gradually pieced together section by section. A specially written piece of software then took the 3D SoftImage model and converted it into a format the PlayStation could use. This working model was then dropped into the *Wipeout* game engine and (thanks to the miracle of science) able to be 'played' immediately. The models were then tested for good playing potential and, once accepted, had surrounding scenery added. This scenery-adding stage is a lengthy process, but once complete allows the artists to begin adding texture to the tracks and finalising the placement of the weapon pods and speed-up markers.



AND JUST FOR VARIETY'S SAKE, THIS PARTICULAR SKETCH HAS THE IMPORTANT SECTIONS COLOURED IN FOR YOUR INDIVIDUAL DELIGHT.

CONTINUED OVER

ing on the PAL version. This is because you know you're going to have to do it at the end. If you don't start it at the beginning, when you get to the end of the project (when everyone is knackered from late nights) the product is only going to suffer. Late nights are on the agenda!"

BRAD STOPS With each craft now having a set, finite amount of energy, replenishing shields and overall energy takes on a much more important role. If you aren't lucky enough to collect an emergency E-Pak during your travels, you might want to make a quick pit stop. This isn't so much a full pit stop as a

fly-by power-up — working in a similar way to the recharging lanes in Bullfrog's *Hi-Octane*. By taking a certain route through a section of energising track, your energy bar fills itself up and you're back in business. As a slight penalty, the energising track sections are set a tad off the beaten track and you will suffer a slightly slower lap time. Still, that's the price you pay for getting hit! Andrew explains the logic: "Once you're a good driver the pit stops won't be so necessary — if anything, you'll get an E-Pak that'll get you to the line — because people like playing it for the lap time, and you don't want to be punishing

people just for hitting walls. It's really more a survival thing — especially in the challenging championship mode where you only have a set number of lives with which to get as far as you possibly can.

GHOSTS IN THE MACHINE While the Time Trial in the original *Wipeout* was just you against the clock, *Wipeout 2097* features a 'ghost ship' that is in fact a recording of your best time, played back and racing against you. This means that after you've completed your first lap, a phantom craft appears to challenge you for the remaining laps — and it's

you! I know — brilliant!

The only other recent game to have featured such a mode was the Virgin Interactive PC game, *Screamer* — and it proved to be an incredibly challenging addition. It also updates after each new record lap time, so as you improve your lap, the ghost ship changes to the faster lap recording. Oh, and in case you're wondering, no, you can't shoot yourself or crash into yourself — that's why it's called a ghost. Ooh, aah.

LINK-UP LOVERS There are a few changes to the format for the link-up mode within *Wipeout 2097*, but for the most





EXTRAORDINARY ORDINANCE

Just wait until you get a load of the stunning new weapons being designed for *WipeOut 2097* – each one has a devastating effect on any enemy craft on the receiving end.

MISSILE One of the more basic weapons (though no less dramatic in appearance for it) this is a simple, heat-seeking missile that zips off across the track in search of something to blow up.

ROCKET The rockets fire in a spread of three, evenly spaced, horizontal shots. These travel down the track inflicting damage to any thing in the way.

ELECTRO BOLT This in acts in a similar way to the plasma weapon seen in the original. It fires off an intense, homing charge that causes any targeted craft to lose control for a fraction of a second.

THUNDERBOMB An enormous smart bomb that inflicts huge amounts of damage to any craft in sight (and for the same distance behind you).

QUAKE Another weapon that affects as far as you can see, the Quake is probably one of the single-most impressive visual effects in the game. When used, The track ripples in a huge wave



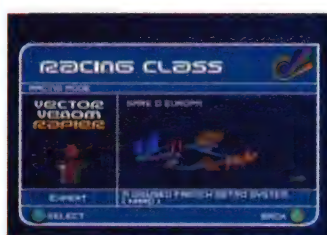
that throws any craft in the way, er... out of the way. It's absolutely bloody fantastic!

PLASMA BOLT This is an extremely powerful weapon, but not an easy one to target. It powers-up in a similar way to *Doom*'s BFG releasing a powerful bolt a second after activation that will cause any craft hit some serious damage. However, this is *not* a homing device and calls for some fancy flying.

MINES Pretty much the same as those in the first game.

TURBO The turbo works in exactly the same way as it did before, hitting the player with a sudden burst of speed.

AUTO-PILOT Activate this and for a few valuable seconds your craft will auto-pilot itself around the track, flying the perfect line. Apart from giving you a breather, you can save these for extra-tough sections of the



HAVING DR CREATE THE VARIOUS SUB-MENUS AND OPTION SCREENS HAS MADE A DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE TO THE GAME'S PRESENTATION.

part, it's all familiar territory. One of the few differences is that there are no additional weapons for the two-player game. The reason for this was that it was felt the 'reverse controls' power-up was just too extreme, and with the tracks of *WipeOut 2097* being less generous with power-ups, turning them off was also inhibiting.

One new feature for the link-up mode is the ability to play against a second human opponent either as a head-to-head (as in the original *WipeOut*) or in a full race with the second human and a full compliment of computer drivers. This negates one of the problems found in the original game where, if you had players of equal skill, it was a simple matter of whoever buggered up first lost.

THE REPUBLIC OF DESIGNERS One of the most important factors behind the entire *WipeOut* identity (and its subsequent shift across into clothing and music markets) was the involvement of the infamous design team known as Designers Republic. Their instantly recog-



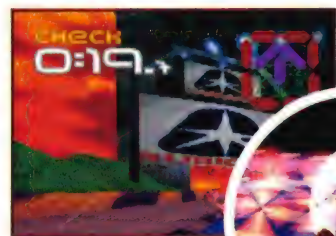
LIGHT AND MAGIC EFFECTS AHOY!
You need to see these in action
to appreciate the full effect.

track, ultimately performing those sections perfectly.

EMERGENCY E-PAK This quick-repair energy pack is activated to top up precious energy supplies. Though you might be able to get through the first few tracks without worrying too much about shield strength, later levels will require some thoughtful supply management.

SHIELDS Again, like the mines and turbos, the shields remain much the same as in the previous version, offering a few seconds of invulnerability.

MINI GUN This weapon has yet to be confirmed, but once picked up gives the player fifty rounds of chain gun action. Whether it'll make it into the final game, though, remains to be decided.



nisable style was originally to be used only for packaging and advertising, but their ideas so matched the 'feel' Psynosis were after, that they slowly but surely crept into the game; eventually infiltrating track features and even the detail of the craft themselves.

Of course, while their involvement in the original *Wipeout* was more by accident than any grand plan, the producers made sure to involve Designers Republic throughout the development of *Wipeout 2097*.

While the first game had fairly a fairly standard front end and menu systems, DR created a completely new look for the new game as well as designing the various logos and badges used throughout the game.

SOUNDS FAMILIAR As important as the visuals were to the success of the original *Wipeout*, the sound effects and music were equally important — and in fact so well received was the music that it was eventually released on a CD of its own. For *Wipeout 2097* the team are looking to get even more names



involved (*Wipeout* featured tracks from such luminaries as The Chemical Brothers, Leftfield, and Orbital) and while remaining tight lipped for the moment, they have revealed that they are hoping for ten tracks from six different artists, one of which will hopefully be from Future Sound of London.

LATE RUNNER "It's very hard to realistically schedule when you're developing a product because you're aware of the

end deadline threatening over the horizon. There's a mountain of stuff you want to do, but it's just accepted that you'll be inventing and adding new odds and sods as you go." And so says Andrew, but how difficult is it to stop yourself from constantly thinking up new ideas to fit in? "Part of what you do is say that something is going to take a week when you think it's going to take two days. You then have a couple of days to muck around with an idea before including or excluding it. If something goes horribly wrong, then you've got time to catch up, and if something doesn't go horribly wrong, you've earned yourself more time. Thanks to this logic we're actually ahead of ourselves and already have details like moving track-side scenery, rain, and flash engine trails working." A good example of the self control necessary when developing is that, originally the team wanted a slip-stream effect coming off the crafts' wings when they turned corners, but it was just too much; either slowing the game down too much or just not looking right at certain

angles. Needless to say, this feature didn't make it into the final game. On the whole, there are very few instances such as this (ie early ideas that were later dropped) and in fact the team have managed to do a lot more than they initially thought possible. "It's become a lot bigger than we originally intended!" Which is nice.

AND THE FUTURE? With the entire *Wipeout* style and brand having proved so successful for both the actual game and the subsequent music, design and merchandising, even if there's no *Wipeout 3* planned, there must surely be plans to carry on the brand? Andrew Satterthwaite: "I suppose (getting into territory I shouldn't now) that you'd look at games where you start to, quite literally, venture more off the track. The truth is that we haven't thought about it yet. I'm sure the *Wipeout* brand — which is really what it is — will continue after *Wipeout 2097*, but the process hasn't started yet, and probably won't until we've finished with this game."



ONE-TO-ONE

SLEEPING WITH THE



DEVIL

ID SOFTWARE WAS FIRST FORMED IN SEPTEMBER, 1990, WHEN THE COMPANY'S DIRECTORS JOHN CARMACK, JOHN ROMERO, TOM HALL AND ADRIAN CARMACK CREATED COMMANDER KEEN: INVASION OF THE VORTICANS. JAY WILBUR, CO-OWNER OF THE COMPANY JOINED LATER AND PLAYED A KEY PART IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOOM, WHILE MIKE WILBUR WAS GIVEN A JOB AFTER THE HUGE SUCCESS OF THE 3D BLASTER. BOTH ARE AVID GAME FANS.



ONE-TO-ONE

On the 10th of December 1993, a software legend was born. id Software, previously known for coding the relatively successful *Wolfenstein 3D*, unleashed *Doom* to the games playing public. Little did they know that this would be the single most influential game ever to appear, the inspiration for countless clones and tributes. Widely recognised as the best 3D action game ever, *Doom* has shifted over 15 million units on the PC and is currently eating it's way through the Next Generation console market.

But id Software is not one for resting on its laurels. Having since released a sequel, *Doom II: Hell on Earth*, as well as the fantasy-style *Heretic* and its follow-up, *Hexen*, id is now adding the final touches to what promises to be the hottest property of 1996 - *Quake*. At this Spring's European Computer Trade Show, Jay Wilbur, id's 'Biz' guy, and Mike Wilson, id's 'Biz' guy #2, flew from Texas to London to show off their latest baby. As expected, *Quake* is incredibly impressive, but what id wasn't ready for was a surprise visit from *PlayStation Plus*' ever-cynical reporter...



Doom was a big hit here in the UK. Were you pleased with the PlayStation conversion of *Doom*?

id Software: "Oh yeah. It was the best."



Did you think Williams, the developers, could have done more with it?

id: "No, not with what we gave them. The turn-around time was all right. It was good enough just to combine the best levels from *Doom* and *Doom 2*. They did add quite a bit."



Having seen what Williams done with *Doom*, will it be doing any other conversions for you, like *Hexen* for example?

"With *Quake* we just wanted to make the best game of the year, hopefully for a couple of years."

id: "Depending on availability. Jay's actually got a deal going. *Hexen*'s being developed right now by Rage."



How's the conversion coming along? Have you seen anything of it?

id: "The first version we saw was not really up to par with what Williams done with *Doom*, so we sent it back. But it's coming along. They'll keep working on it until they get it right."



Is the PlayStation version going to be any different from the PC game?

id: "We're not really sure at the moment. Certainly, it'll take advantage of the console; all of our products will."



Did you work closely with Williams on the conversion of *Doom*?

id: "Not that close. The developers didn't really work with Williams, we let them do their own thing. We are close geographically though – our offices are very close, but id has been working on *Quake* for the last two years and so we didn't really have time for anything else."



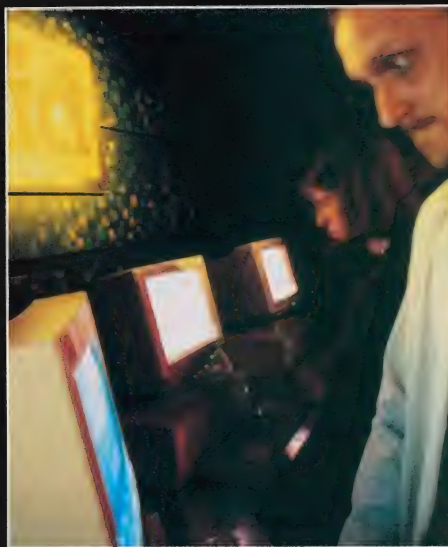
***Wolfenstein 3D*, one of id's first games, was fairly popular but wasn't a patch on *Doom*. Were you surprised by the tremendous success of *Doom*?**

id: "I [Mike] wasn't actually at id when it was first released, but I think it's cool because it got me a job! We all knew that *Doom* was going to be a big game. I mean, we're game players. We sat down and played *Doom* and said, 'Hey!' We were amazed at the level of success, the magnitude that it reached. Even if we go back to *Wolfenstein* before that, it didn't hit the same level that *Doom* did. We were all extremely surprised. If you went back two years to they day we released *Doom* and told me that there'd be four *Doom* novels on the streets and a *Doom* movie in the works, I'd have thought you were crazy!"



You're still programming the PC version of *Quake*. What did you originally set out to achieve with the game?

id: "We just wanted to make the best game of the year. Hopefully for a couple of years. I think people will be working for another year



or two to catch up with this technology, and then hopefully by then we'll have moved on to the next stage. From everything we've seen, I think our head start is still intact."



Since *Doom* was released, you've have constantly updated the 3D engine. Do you consider yourselves to be always looking to push pack the boundaries?

id: "Absolutely. Our development is based completely on new technology. John

"The first version of PlayStation HEXEN we saw was not really up to par with what Williams done with DOOM, so we sent it back. But it's coming along. Rage will keep working on it until they get it right."

Carmack, the lead developer and the president of the company, is like a hot-rod for software engines. The game is just built around whatever he comes up with. We take everything we've learnt from the past games, carry them over and use whatever new capabilities he's given us."



Will *Quake* be appearing on the PlayStation?

id: "Yeah. We'll convert it to every platform that can handle it, basically."



How difficult do you think the conversion process will be, taking into account the limitations of the PlayStation compared to the more versatile PC?

id: "I don't know. It'll be interesting to see how they pull it off!"



Is id going to handle the conversion or will it be another coding team going to be drafted in?

id: "We're only a small group, just fourteen people, and we'll be on *Quake 2* by then. Probably what will happen is the lead developers, John Carmack and Michael Abrash, the people actually running the engine, will go onto the next engine. Other people are better at converting it anyway, to tell you the honest truth!"



Again, are there any plans to include extra features unique to the PlayStation game?

id: "We'd like to see it. It's all got to do with contractual obligations."



Was it Williams' idea to include all of the hidden extras in *Doom*, like Club *Doom* for example?

id: "We had creative control and we did change a lot of things. The things that they brought us that we thought were cool stayed in. But yeah, a lot of the features were their original ideas."



But you still had the final say on the conversion?

id: "Yeah. Everything had to be okayed by the group, and it's a pretty hard group to get things by, you know! So yeah, we ultimately decided on the final product."



So far id is renowned for producing just 3D blasters. Are there any plans to branch out into other genres?

id: "No, this is what we're good at, and these are the games we like to play. Why write something that we wouldn't even want to play ourselves?"



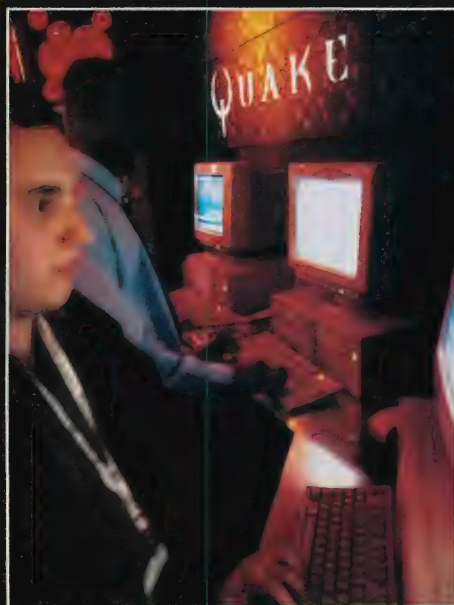
It's early days yet, but are there any plans to succeed *Quake*?

id: "There's no big master plan. There'll be *Quake* add-ons and things. I've got this vision of an online world which *Quake* can support. A lot of it will be based on trying to increase those capabilities, doing whatever we can with this technology while John Carmack is hot-rodding his next engine!"



So is id going to make more of network gaming?

id: "Yeah. *Quake* has been built from the



ground up with multi-player gaming in mind, it's best when being played in Deathmatch."

ESP What about a multi-player co-operative mode?

id: "We'll probably include one, but whether anybody will use it is a different matter."



ESP How far off completion is Quake?

id: "Who knows? You can kind of see how far along we are, and that's the best I can tell you. We've got eleven levels basically completely, and we're looking to develop about thirty, somewhere in that magical range. That's barring any major design changes, which could happen at any time and give the game a complete facelift. But everyone's ready to round it up and finish it."

ESP Are you flattered that Doom inspired so many clones? Do you actually like any of the Doom wannabes?

id: "Some of them are cool. Like I said, we like to play to play those games. Dark Forces was a big hit, and everybody liked to play that."

ESP Are there any games you wished you had developed?

id: "The games that we did develop we had a passion for, as opposed to a need for the money. The money and the success just came with it. We're delighted with the games that we did. Out of all the games that come along, we still go back to Doom. We play it a lot. We

love our own games. We're our biggest critics and our biggest fans. We play to excess."

ESP Do you think the future will stay with the PC or will Next Generation consoles lead the way?

"Our development is based completely on new technology. We take everything we've learned from the past games, carry them over and use whatever new capabilities John Carmack, id's lead programmer, has given us."

id: "They both have their place. The PC is always going to be there. I do see at some time a convergence, but that's still a way off. Consoles like PlayStation are still very specialised, they are purely game boxes. As soon as the technology to do the kind of stuff a PC can do gets stuffed into that grey box, there'll be a price drop for the PC. The convergence is on it's way, but it's going to be a while before the price gets down to the point where the average Joe has a decent PC in his office. I think the console's going to be with us for quite some time. We played all of our stuff on consoles."

ESP What do you think is the next 'Big Thing'?

id: "Multi-player gaming, definitely. That aspect of the market is just going to consume everything. In the future there are going to be huge networks like the BT Wireplay, and in the States there are already three communications companies developing nationwide systems. When that happens, multiplayer play is really going to take over; it's going to be part of how things work. Everyone's going to be connected to the net, like a cable coming into your house for television. Eventually, when the infrastructure for cable television becomes a two-way system, we'll start seeing some really cool stuff where you don't actually buy the game, but you buy time on the game, that sort of thing. I've seen it work already. They're doing a similar test out in Japan. I tell you, when I sat down and messed around with that system, I touched the future. But it's big dollars to rewire the whole of Britain."



SOUNDBITES

id Software on...

PLAYSTATION DOOM

"I prefer to play it on the PC because I'm used to it on the PC. My kids love it on the PlayStation, however."

THE DOOM MOVIE

"It's progressing but it's a very slow business. There's have been four different scripts developed, and we've read every single one. They've got a really good one going now."

INTERACTIVE MOVIES

"They suck. They're no fun. I like in-your-face-gotta-do-something, not click...click...click. That's not fun. I mean, if you want a movie, go get a VCR and tape it."

BT'S WIREPLAY

"The new Internet service? I've done some reading on it, but I'm not hip enough on it to really offer an valuable opinion. I think it's a step in the right direction though."

DEVELOPERS THEY ADMIRE

"The guys at Scavenger are really good. As far as new content stuff, we love the LucasArts guys. Our friends at Raven are very, very talented guys. The guys at Probe are cool. The Williams guys. Let's get a list out, we like everybody - except the ones who do interactive movies! No, you can tell the ones we like, because we're working with them all."

LIKES AND DISLIKES OF THE SOFTWARE INDUSTRY

"Windows 95 is curing a lot of the problems the software developer had. Under DOS, supporting the various additional hardwares is a real pain in the ass. Nine out of ten times if something goes wrong, the user, who doesn't really know where the problem lies, blames the software guy. In reality it's probably the hardware guy's fault because he didn't follow the same standard. Thanks to Windows 95 all that's changing. So, what we're doing with Quake under DOS is developing an open-driver model where we'll develop the 3D card drivers - we'll write the driver for one of the boards, the reference driver, and then we'll send it off to everybody and say, 'Okay, now you write your own driver, and that driver had better list your technical support phone number when it starts off, because it's not our problem!' Technical support is a big issue, and a big expense."

"If you went back two years to the day we released DOOM and told me that there'd be four DOOM novels on the streets and a DOOM movie in the works, I'd have thought you were crazy!"



ONE-TO-ONE



REVIEW

Fade to Black



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE AUGUST

PRICE £44.99

BY EA

PLAYERS 1



onversions of PC games are sometimes a bit of a cop-out. Games that have already appeared on the PC

are directly ported across to the PlayStation, with virtually no visible difference and little or no use made of the machine's light-sourcing capabilities. This minor annoyance can be over-looked if the game is good enough to begin with, but when the original subject matter is lacklustre, the result is a complete waste of time, money and the CD medium. *Fade to Black*, the latest in Electronic Arts long line of conversions, fits into neither of those categories. Sure, it's was originally released on the PC but, like *Doom*, the conversion has been fine-tuned to make this the most enjoyable incarnation of the made yet.

Although the game mechanics have been changed slightly, the storyline remains the same. *Fade to Black* follows on from where *Flashback* left off, with Conrad Hart drifting through space, deep in hyper-sleep. As the rendered cutscene rolls a massive Morph cruiser slides into views, traps Hart's ship in its tractor beam and drags him on board. Seconds later Conrad is woken up at gun point, thrown from the cryo chamber and locked up deep within the Morph prison planet. All looks bleak. He's carrying nothing, has no weaponry and is exhausted after such a unusually long hyper-sleep. Then the cavalry coming charging to the rescue...

And so Conrad plight to escape from the Morphs begins one again. The world he explores is strangely familiar, running leap and exploring every locker and cupboard in pretty much the same way as he did on the PC. However, his combat skills have since improved, and battling the Morphs is slightly easy. That's not to say the Morphs have lightened up since their last encounter, because they haven't. They too have become much wiser and skilled than before, and this time you're battling on their home turf so expect the odd to be stacked ridiculously against you!

CONRAD AND HIS COHORTS

CONRAD HART

Star of *Flashback* and all-round good guy, Conrad is the lone ranger who must face the might of the Morphs. Starts the game locked up inside a Morph penitentiary but is soon rescued by the Human Resistance. Unlucky, Morphoid scum!



JOHN O' CONNORS

Conrad's first friendly acquaintance and commander of the Human Resistance. A skilled fighter and fierce enemy of the Morph, he helps Conrad escape from the prison. Unfortunately there is a side to John O' Connors yet to be seen.

SARAH SMITH

The bob-haired leader of the Human Resistance, Sarah is first introduced to Conrad after he escapes from the clutches of the Morphs with the help of John O' Connors. Immediately she asks Conrad's to join the battle against the Morphs. Being a gentleman he naturally agrees.

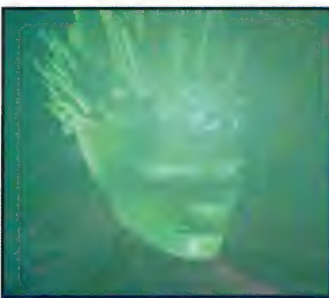
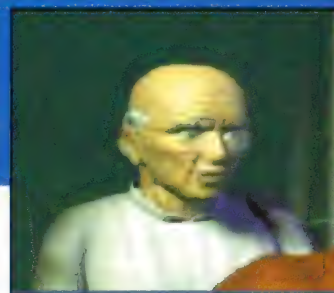


SUPER MORPH

Considerably bigger and one helluva lot nastier than the normal Morphs, this mega-monstie appears near the end of the game, hunting down Conrad through the dimly-lit corridors. He's pretty tough and can only be toasted by the ship's afterburners.

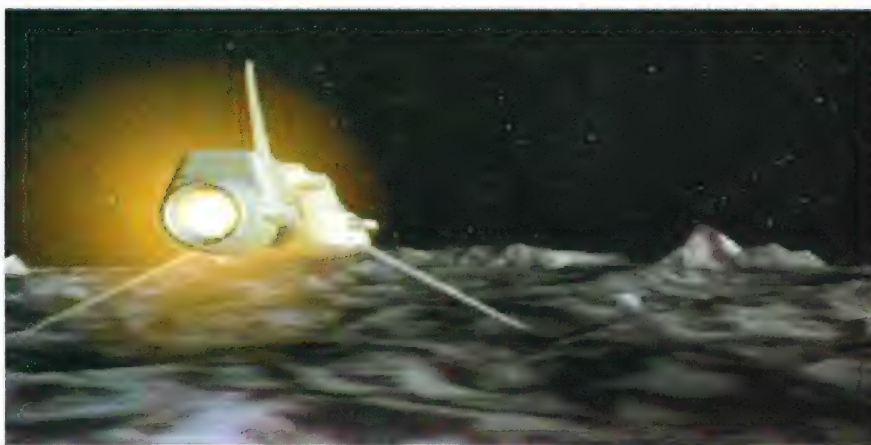
PROFESSOR BERGSTEIN

This man holds the key to the annihilation of the Morphs, but first Conrad must find the bespectacled professor and win his trust. However, he's hidden deep within the Morph base and they're not too keen on unexpected visitors.



AGEER

Ageer is one of the mysterious Elders, a race of super beings that were all but destroyed by the invading Morph army. Now they rest, waiting for the opportunity to strike back against the evil that practically killed them.



THE GREAT ESCAPE

Don't be fooled by Conrad casual appearance, behind his tatty jeans and scrappy jacket lies a man of steel. Well, probably a man of tinfoil. Anyway, the poor bloke's been caught by the Morphs once again, having escaped from their clutches at the end of *Flashback*.



1 Locked inside a 10'x12' steel cell with just a wristwatch and a laser blaster to survive, Conrad Hart has the odds stacked against him. Until he found a copy of *PlayStation Plus* hidden under the bunk, that is...



2 After receiving the message from John O'Connors, Conrad is informed that he must escape to Level 2, the infirmary. There he must grab a medi-kit as inside is hidden a scrambling device that will allow the pair to escape.



3 Inside the locker is a bouncing bomb, a fairly useful weapon that should be saved for later. Outside, the Morphs have already been alerted to your escape and single drone combat droid awaits his arrival.

HART BREAKER



Visually, *Fade to Black* on the PlayStation is by far the best version to date. Conrad, for example, isn't just a flat, Gouraud-shaded polygon bloke like he was on the PC. Instead he's been created in Real-O-Vision™, with texture-mapped clothes and face to give him that 'almost real' look. His gelled hair looks like it's made entirely of plastic.



17 The guard room is infested with Morphs and drones – take the gits out. Next to the Kartrack is a switch which you should flick, before following the vehicle around the room and through the double doors. Ride the elevator to the next level and escape in the spacecraft. Phew!



16 Back at the elevator, transport to the lower level before nipping into the adjacent lift. Step through the previously locked door and activate the switch to operate the guard room elevator. Next walk through the other exit and jump inside the first lift on the right.



15 Turn around and destroy the Morph that appears from behind and grab the yellow crystal left behind. Open the locker to get the hanger door code. Exit the room and run straight down the corridor, into the room on the right and open the hanger door from the terminal.



14 Key in hand, return to the elevator and ride the one on the right. Blast the tank and proceed through the opening on the left. In this room there's a guard sitting at a desk – don't step straight around the corner. Instead aim, then side-step until he's in view, then quickly open fire!



4 Having destroyed the droid, run across the pad and through the door. Next, stand on the green floor pad and wait for the robot to trundle down on the right. When it deactivates the security lasers, run past.



5 Watch out for the laser in the distance – take out the camera on the right to render it useless. Step inside the elevator and ride to the next level, where Conrad can restore shield energy by using the terminal opposite.



6 Walk into the med-bay and immediately aim at the spider droid. After destroying it, avoid the mines on either side of the room and activate the switch in the distance. Take the info scanner and the clue from the lockers.



7 Through the nearest door, run past the two Morphs and open the door using the switch on the right of it. Nip into the next room and walk around to the left, to the room equipped with the hydraulic loader.

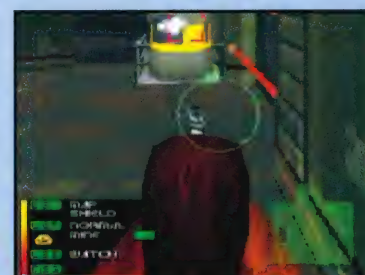
COMMENT

STEVE

Fade to Black is one of the most innovative titles the PlayStation has seen. Conrad's adventures are viewed in a stunning 3D world, and the missions are both long and challenging. Similarly, the unfolding plot adds a movie-style feel to the game, creating a superb atmosphere. I could have lived without the shoot 'em up sections, but overall this is one of EA's greatest releases to date.

LETHAL LINO

Although the Morphs pose the biggest threat to Conrad's life, there are also many lethal obstacles that must be avoided throughout the game. Step on one of these electric floor panels and Conrad will be fried alive, while the seemingly harmless light beams will tear the hapless Hart limb from limb. Disgusting. Less dangerous are these triangular pads that are often scattered on the ground which shove poor Conrad Hart considerably helplessly across the floor.



8 Kick start the lifter by using the terminal in the corner. Quickly, crouch into the combat position and shoot the barrel being carried by the loader as it passes the security lasers by the door. Once they've been deactivated, step into the medi-centre.



9 Shoot the Morph behind the boxes and also the body on the bed, before grabbing the med-pack and the key from the lockers. The medi-kit contains a scrambler, and immediately you'll receive a message from O' Connors.



13 Two Morph guards will be waiting for you – destroy both of them. Take the elevator to the next level and run down the long corridor. Zap the guard and leap across the electric floor panel, before running through the door searching the office for the rec room key.



12 Leave the computer room and walk through the door on the right, into the cryo chamber. Shoot the Morph and walk around to the left, carefully approaching the door surrounded by electric floor panels. Leap across the lethal pad, making sure the door is open before you jump.



11 Walk through the door on the same wall as the shield re-energising station and take out the Morph lying in wait. Head into the computer room on the left and into the small anti-chamber, also on the left. Eliminate the waiting guard and hit the switch in front of the wall monitor.



10 Leave the med-bay through the unopened door, and immediately eliminate the two drones in the next room. Next dodge into the hallway on the right and take out the Morph guard. Having done so, top up your shield once more by logging onto the terminal.

LET THE BATTLE COMMENCE

LEVEL 1

The first follows Conrad's desperate attempt to escape from the Morph prison. Security drones, defence lasers and, of course, the dreaded Morphs plagued the corridors. After exploring the complex and decoding the hangar bay door, Hart and O'Connors escape in a small space cruiser.



LEVEL 2

Having teamed up with the Resistance Conrad is beamed aboard a Morph cruiser to sabotage an antenna which will allow the Morphs to remote-control human brains. Unfortunately the mission fails, but as luck would have it Conrad is rescued by the Elder known as Ageer.



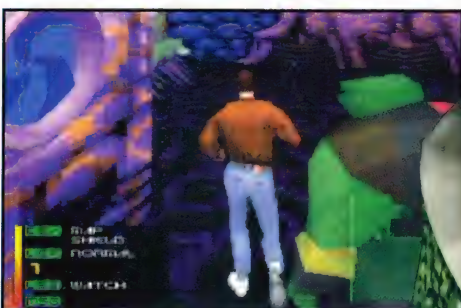
LEVEL 3

Taking Hart to Pluton, Ageer introduces our hero to an abandoned city created by the Elders. They agree to help Conrad but all too soon the Morphs warp into orbit and begin their attack. The Elders are beamed aboard the Morph mothership and are held captive by the powerful Masterbrain called Zaarch.



LEVEL 4

Conrad escapes from the Morphs, only to return to the fray when he teleports onto the mothership in search of the Elders. During his search of the sprawling vessel he stumbles across John O'Connors, talking with the Morph Masterbrain. Is one-time Human Resistance fighter hiding a secret?



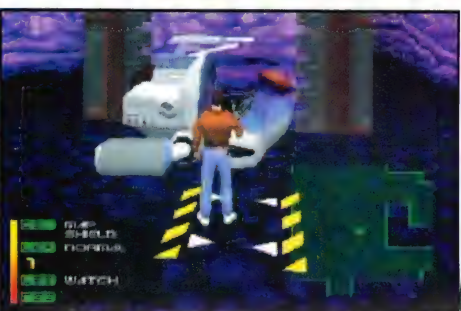
LEVEL 5

Having fled the Morph ship and return to the Mandragore base of Shadow, Conrad fails to escape danger as the shape-shifting gits have followed him through hyper-space! In the middle of the chaos it seems the base has been booby-trapped with explosives, a little present from O'Connors. Hart must disarm them all.



LEVEL 6

After fending off the initial attack, Hart and the Elders decide it's time to take back what was once theirs – the Earth. To do this the Resistance must defeat the Masterbrain in control of the planet, then... well, we don't to spoil the surprise. We'll let you see what happens next.



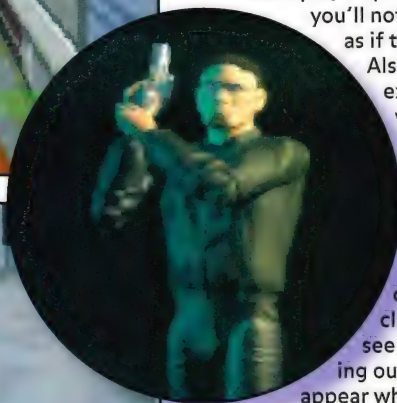
SHIFTY SHAPESHIFTERS



Sometime what you see isn't necessarily the truth. For example, when Conrad first approaches this Resistance fighter he looks perfectly human. Upon closer inspection however, it turns out to be a blood-sucking Morph. There's also the seemingly helpless chef cowering on the first level. Leave him be and the bugged will lock Conrad in the deep freeze chamber. Git.



MORPH MAKEOVER

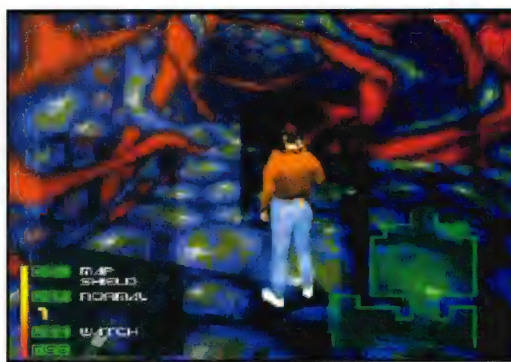


Conrad Hart isn't the only character in the game to be treated to a full facelift. Even the Morphs look better than ever before, with vibrant green scales and glowing red eyes. There's also the background graphics, many of which are now animated. For

example, step inside the Morph ship and you'll notice the walls bubble gently, as if the entire ship was alive. Urgh.

Also look out for visual effects exclusive to the PlayStation version of the game, including smokes trails from the Morph blasters and a weird glow as Conrad is teleported from one place to another. More impressive are the Predator-like Morphs that use portable cloaking devices to charge in close for the kill. Impossible to see apart from a faint, shimmering outline, these beasts only appear when hit by Conrad's blaster.

IN THE PLAYSTATION VERSION OF FADE TO BLACK THE MORPHS ARE MORE DETAILED AND ARE MORE BRIGHTLY COLOURED.



ON A WING AND A PRAYER



The flying sections of *Fade to Black* have been dramatically improved since *PlayStation Plus* previewed the game back in Issue 8. Graphically they're now much neater, the backgrounds more defined and the scrolling slightly smoother. The craft is also much easier to control, pulling back and pushing forward on the pad to rise and fall respectively, and using the shoulder buttons to slip to either side to avoid incoming fire. However, the pod isn't particularly well protected, and will crumble if it accidentally skims through one of the many power fields. There's also a fast trench run a la *Star Wars*.

Climbing inside a small fighter, Conrad attempts to escape from the pursuing Morphs in the frantic climax to the game.



COMMENT

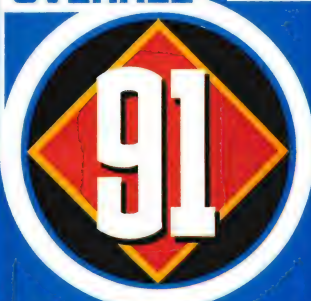
ALEX

Fade to Black is yet another

reminder that French developer Delphine is still capable of mind-blowing games. With *Fade to Black* it has successfully added another dimension to *Flashback*, combining brilliant 3D graphics with some frighteningly difficult puzzles and tests of joystick prowess. It's an epic adventure that requires pixel-perfect precision as well as fast reflexes to react quickly to enemy threat, not to mention a clear head for lateral thinking. This combination of gameplay styles makes for an absorbing game, one that's far more interesting than a simple shoot 'em up or indeed a straightforward puzzle game. But even though you'll be engrossed by the gameplay, it's hard not to notice the presentation. It is quite simply brilliant, with tremendous variety in the background graphics, the character sprites and even the cutscenes. The animation is also smart, but best of all is the fact that Delphine honed the PlayStation game, making it more arcade-y to play which can only make for a better game. Engrossing stuff.

RATING

GRAPHICS	92
ANIMATION	86
SOUND FX	75
MUSIC	84
LASTABILITY	90
PLAYABILITY	88
OVERALL	91



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: VARIABLE
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE AUGUST

PRICE £44.99

BY KONAMI

PLAYERS 1-4

Track and Field



Somehow, as we speak, there lies a broken joypad in the PlayStation Plus offices. No one sat on it, no one threw it against a wall, and (just for a change) Steve didn't drop it on the floor. No, it was a mercy killing. It, how you say, passed away peacefully in the line of duty. But how? I hear you ask. Having survived my 'reviewing' *Street Fighter Alpha* for about twelve weeks solidly you'd think the mighty Sony pads could stand up to any amount of punishment. Ah, but of course that was before Konami's *International Track and Field*...

Though I know we're always boring

the pants off you, going on and on about how great all this 'retro' scene is, and how brilliant things were in 'the good old days', it does seem as though games have come full circle. Ten years ago I sat in front of my Spectrum with a busted keyboard and a knackered joystick thanks to the likes of *Hyper Sports* and *Daley Thompson's Decathlon*, and here we go again.

Steve's finger has a blister the size of Lancashire, Al's arm has swollen up to Popey-esque proportions, and I'm off to try and break my hammer record. Again! So it's time to pound the joypads and get seriously angry every time you forget that the best angle is 45°. D'oh!



EVENT 1

100m SPRINT

About as simple as they get, and a nice event to get your finger warmed up, the 100m sprint is a simple case of the fastest digit winning. Fairly obviously, getting off the blocks nice and quickly helps, but it's mostly down to sheer stamina and consistency. For that extra hundredth of a second, the jump button can be used to dive across the finishing line.

QUALIFY
12.50 sec

EVENT 2

LONG JUMP

The first event to call upon your angle-setting skills, the long jump relies on two actions. Firstly, you need to build up as much speed as possible in the usual finger-tapping way, but then you need to initiate your jump as close to the foot plate as you can without going over (and so suffer a foul). You then need to keep the jump buttons pressed while the angle increases, aiming for 45°.

QUALIFY
6.50 m

EVENT 3

SHOT PUT

The first of the 'rotational' throwing events introduces the player to the 'helpful arrow' marker that guides your throw. As always, the first thing to do is power up as much strength as possible, before turning and launching the shot as close to 45° as you can manage. This is done by first watching the arrow marker to judge when you'll turn, and then holding the button down for the best angle.

QUALIFY
17.50m

EVENT 4

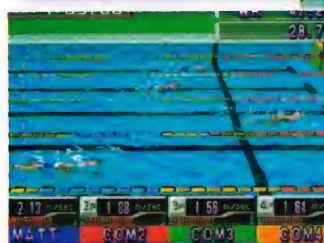
100m FREESTYLE

Easily the most knacker event of the entire tournament, the freestyle swimming relies on nothing more than sheer stamina and staying power. From the start it's down to furious button pounding, and arm-aching action. An added problem to deal with is that, at the end of the first lap, you need to initiate the turn with the

jump button. Get this right or suffer major brain-ache!

QUALIFY

1:05.00 sec



EVENT 5

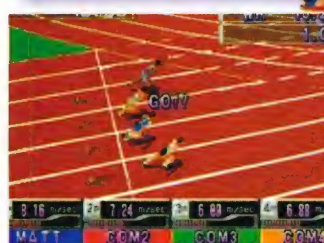
110m HURDLE

And just as your arms were about to fall off after the swimming, it's time to get even more knackered with the 110m hurdles! This is a real test of your co-ordination, as you have to keep up full strength as if in the 100m sprint, but with the added worry of jumping over the hurdles. I remain one of the few who can do this without

hitting pretty much every hurdle – but it ain't easy!

QUALIFY

16.00 sec



EVENT 6

HIGH JUMP

One of the more tricky events, the high jump works in a similar way to the other jump events in that you must first power as much speed in your run-up as possible. As far as the actual jump goes, it's not so much about getting the angle right as it is about timing the launch correctly. On about the tenth step you need to jump high,

and then release the jump to flip over the bar.

QUALIFY

1.85m



EVENT 7

HAMMER

A particular favourite of mine, the hammer once again sees the arrow marker doing its thing in a helpful way. As well as giving direction, the arrow also changes colour to indicate how many rotations are left before release. Attack left and right as usual for top speed, and then let the arrow guide you for the launch. After that it's all down to all the usual angle-seeking activities.

QUALIFY

65.00m



EVENT 8

TRIPLE JUMP

The triple jump can be tricky to get right simply because it calls for both a powerful run up and some pretty accurate jumping skills. Having built up as much speed as possible, you have to tap jump once, twice, and then a third time holding down the jump button to achieve the necessary angle. You also have to watch out for a bad back-

wards landing ruining the distance recorded.

QUALIFY
13.50m



EVENT 9

JAVELIN

The only throwing event not to feature the arrow marker, the javelin is more like an aerial long jump (er... if you know what I mean). Anyway, just power up for as much speed as possible in the short run-up, and then time your launch so as to have enough time to get the angle up to the 45° mark without then running over the foul line.

Then you can sit back and enjoy the view.

QUALIFY
70.00m



EVENT 10

POLE VAULT

Not the easiest of events to get through, the pole vault requires good approach speed and spot-on timing for the actual launch. The pole (thankfully) places itself in the pit while you're busy running, but you then need to press the jump button when the pole has bent to its fullest extent, releasing it again at the top-most point of the spring. Not easy, I can tell you.

QUALIFY
4.50 m



EVENT 11

DISCUS

The final game is probably one of the trickiest of the throwing events as you only have a very small amount of time to set the angle. As usual you have to power-up as fast as possible, but with only two rotations, speed really is of the essence. Then, as you come round for the final turn, you have a fraction of a second to get the angle right, before it zips off into the distance.

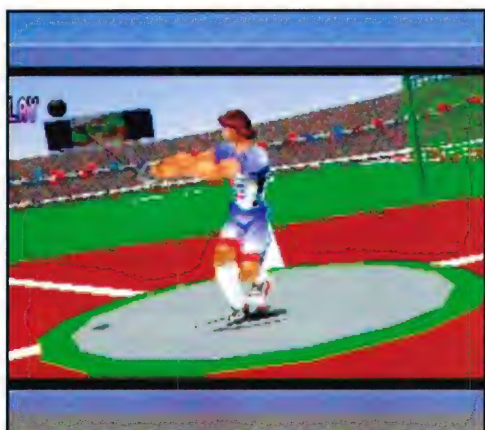
QUALIFY
55.00m





REPLAYS

With such gorgeous graphics, Konami are to be forgiven for showing them off continually. After each event the best performance is shown again in glorious replay-O-vision from a swooping and dramatic camera angle. Very, very sexy stuff.



TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS



AMERICA TAKE FIRST PLACE AGAIN.
AND NOW FOR THE NEXT EVENT...
THE 100M URINE TEST.



As well as featuring superb in-game motion-capture, *International Track and Field* also makes good use of the figures for celebrations and acts of disappointment. Give a perfect performance and your character will jump and wave about with glee. Bigger the whole thing up and he'll crumple to the floor.

1P ARSE GER NO RECORD
DISQUALIFICATION

THE SILLY THINGS PEOPLE DO

As with the original *Track and Field* game, so many moons ago, there are silly little hidden features that present themselves on special occasions. Throw the javelin above a certain angle and you'll

skewer a UFO. Get a score such as 22.22m or 53.53m and balloons or birds will be released across the stadium. There's even a space shuttle to be found!



READY STEADY

You can actually control the order in which the events come, but I prefer going by the traditional order (which includes a knacker 100m freestyle swimming followed by a 110m hurdles). Nasty!



COMMENT

ALEX

International Track and Field is proof that the simplest games are still the best. Even though it's an incredibly easy game to play, with gameplay amounting to little more than basic button-tapping, mastering the various events is a different matter entirely. Precise timing is just as important as nimble joystick prowess, and the skill to break world records only comes through constant practice and the patience to perfect your playing technique. *International Track and Field's* addictive gameplay is complemented by brilliant presentation, with motion capture technology used to great effect to realistically animate the athletes. As a one-player game *International Track and Field* is immensely playable and entertaining. With four players, it's better than sex. With four people.



No, it's NOT A TRAILER FOR THE NEW TERMINATOR FILM, IT IS IN FACT ONE OF THE GORGEOUS INTRO ANIMATION FRAMES. PRETTY, ER... BLUE, EH?

FULL MEDAL JACKET



I don't do all this running around for nothing you know! Oh no, I expect something large, heavy and bloody valuable to be hung round my neck at the end of the day. Still, I suppose I'll have to make do with this garish gold medallion thingy. Time to admire my world records (which can, incidentally, be saved to memory card).

WORLD RECORD		
100m SPRINT	8.01	MATT
LONG JUMP	10.21	MATT
SHOT PUT	26.07	MATT
100m FREE STYLE	47.12	MATT
110m HURDLE	9.98	MATT
HIGH JUMP	2.70	MATT
HAMMER	106.45	MATT
TRIPLE JUMP	18.88	MATT
JAVELIN	103.15	MATT
POLE VAULT	6.14	KONAMI
DISCUS	84.15	MATT

COMMENT

MATT

Folks, we have a winner! Yes, for get your *Actua Soccer* and *Total NBA*, *International Track and Field* features the best motion capture the PlayStation has to offer. And the game... well, what can I say? As a multi-player it's simply brilliant (and a damn good advert for the multi-tap) while the single player game sets you against not only the CPU opponents but yourself, as you try to improve on that elusive (probably-a-damn-fluke) world record. The graphics are quite stunning, and it has to be the first game to perfectly balance gameplay and presentation — with neither suffering for the sake of the other. The variety of events keeps things from becoming too repetitive, and though it may not be one you return to for single-player shenanigans, as a group game, it's up there with *Worms* for sheer competitiveness. Probably the first of the 'retro' games that doesn't rely on rose-tinted nostalgia, *International Track and Field* should keep aging crusties and young players busy for a long time. Just don't expect your joystick — or your fingers — to last very long!

RATING

GRAPHICS	96
ANIMATION	96
SOUND FX	92
MUSIC	89
LASTABILITY	92
PLAYABILITY	93
OVERALL	93



Space Hulk:



Vengeance of the Blood Angels

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD
CONTINUES: MEMORY CARD
SKILL LEVELS: SCALEABLE

RELEASE | AUGUST

PRICE | £44.95

BY | EA

PLAYERS | 1



In the 41st millennium, the most insidious of mankind's enemies are the Genestealers, a

strange and terrifying alien race that knows no fear and lives only to kill. Reptilian in appearance, purestrain Genestealers (the most common form) are huge armoured, six-limbed beasts, supernaturally swift and unbelievably ferocious in combat. Using stranded warp vessels to infiltrate Earth space, these inhuman monstrosities bide their time until they come into contact with other life forms, at which point they awaken from hibernation and prepare to infect the unfortunate visitors.

As an Imperium Space Marine recently promoted to serve in the Terminator company, its down to your Chapter to investigate all occurrences of these deserted Space Hulks and reclaim the craft by eliminating all traces of the Genestealer menace. 'For the Emperor!' Apparently. So begins another attempt at recreating the thrills and dice-throwing spills of a popular board game on a video game console — a trend which is set to expand beyond all belief in the next few months. With Acclaim and Microprose preparing *Magic: The Gathering* games, and US Gold said to be looking into 'serious' role playing games for release late next year, it seems that people with a predilection for becoming 'Bimbo Biggins' or 'Thrandok the Cat-Slayer' have a lot to look forward to.

But now, join us in space as we boldly go where countless people have gone before.

WHERE'S THE BFG?!



Despite what you may think from gazing across these screenshots, *Space Hulk* is not just another *Doom* clone. Well all right, it is another *Doom* clone, but there's more to it than that. For a start *Space Hulk* features a much stronger emphasis on strategy, with the player sometimes having to command an entire company of Space Marines whilst fulfilling various mission objectives and combating the relentless hordes of Genestealers.

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR MINI SCANNER FOR A MAP OF THE AREA AND AN EARLY WARNING ON GENESTEALER ATTACKS.

YOU CAN COMMAND YOUR MARINES TO PERFORM A SEQUENCE OF UP TO FIVE ACTIONS.

COMMAND AND CONQUER!

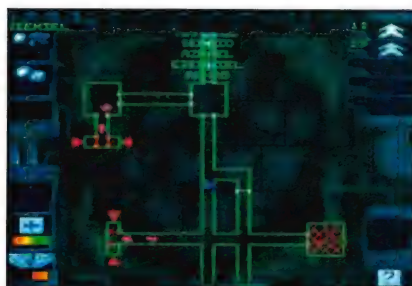
By pressing Select at any time, the action is paused and a top down map of the area is displayed. From here you can 'change' to another Marine, or issue a series of orders to any of your company. So flexible is the command interface that entire missions can be completed just through issuing orders at the map screen. However, be quick about it, as the 'Freeze Time' clock starts to tick down the moment you enter the screen, and when it runs out you're thrown back into the fray, ready or not!



2 Then you command your flamer to move to outside the designated room, open the door and fire inside.



3 Hey presto, the lads march off to carry out your orders.



1 In this mission your objective is to flame a specific room. Firstly you order some of your normal Marines to move to strategic points to provide cover for your flamer.

LOAD HEAVY!

Throughout the game your squad of marines will be decked out with a variety of futuristic weaponry appropriate to the mission they are undertaking. There are two main types of ordinance available: projectile and close combat, and each of the weapons has its own strengths and weaknesses when battling the Genestealer menace.

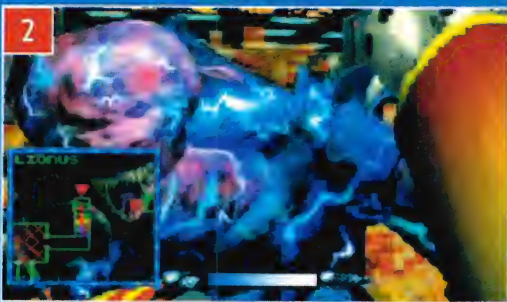
PROJECTILE WEAPONS

STORM BOLTER



The standard armament for all Terminators. A double barrelled automatic projectile firing gun that looses explosive bullets known as 'bolts'. A Storm Bolter is loaded with so many of these bolts that its ammunition is considered to be unlimited in any one mission, although excessive use can cause the bolter to heat up and jam momentarily.

HEAVY FLAMER



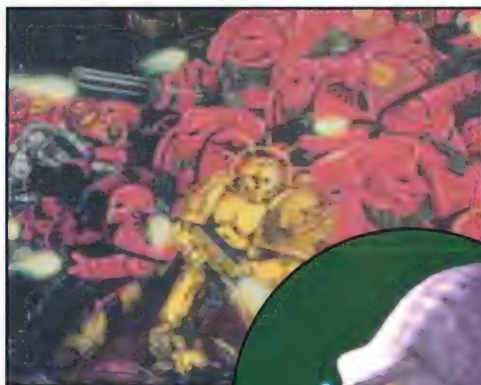
It's usual for one Terminator in each squad to mount a heavy weapon in place of his bolter. The most common heavy weapon is the flamer, a powerful flame thrower capable of setting large areas of the Space Hulk (and multiple Genestealers) alight. Unfortunately the flamer only comes loaded with six shots, though more can be found.

ASSAULT CANNON



The other heavy weapon in the Terminator arsenal is the assault cannon, a large motor powered rotary cannon capable of spewing bursts of explosive tipped rounds from its limited ammo supply. It can destroy both bulkheads and Genestealers with ease, and in tight situations can be employed to fire five bursts in quick succession, known in the trade as strafing.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS



THIS IS THE PURESTRAIN GENESTEALER. UGLY ISN'T HE? EA RENDERED ALL THE IMAGES USING CGI MODELS.

AFTER A HARD MISSION, SPACE MARINES LIKE NOTHING BETTER THAN TO QUAFF A MUG OF FINE ALE DOWN THE LOCAL PUB.

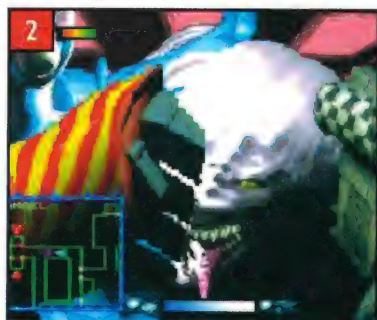


Space Hulk: Vengeance of the Blood Angels is an updated (and improved) conversion of the 3DO chart topper released last year, which in turn is based on the Games Workshop board game of the same name. While the videogame bears more than a passing resemblance to its table top origins, EA have taken the opportunity to bring you face to face with the hideous Genestealers in an all action real time 3D strategy/shoot 'em up.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

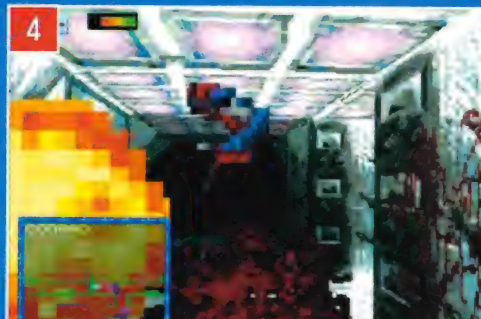
While most of the killing in *Space Hulk* is achieved from a distance (with projectile fire), occasionally a Genestealer will break through your ranks and attack in close combat. Space Marines are not as proficient in a melee as Genestealers (they've got six arms for heaven's sake!) and so they possess very little chance of surviving such an encounter. However, there is an element of skill involved in these battles, and which sharp reflexes you may just emerge the victor.

- 1: Watch the Genestealer carefully. He will bob and weave until he takes a swipe at you.
- 2: As he does quickly press the Parry button to block his attack.
- 3: Then, once the attack has been deflected, respond with an attack of your own.



LIKE THE BOARD GAME THERE IS STILL A RANDOM ELEMENT TO THE CLOSE COMBAT.

GRENADE LAUNCHER

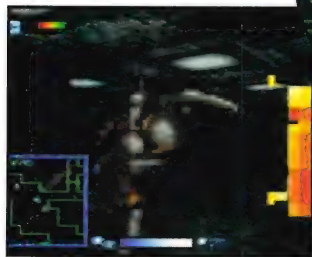
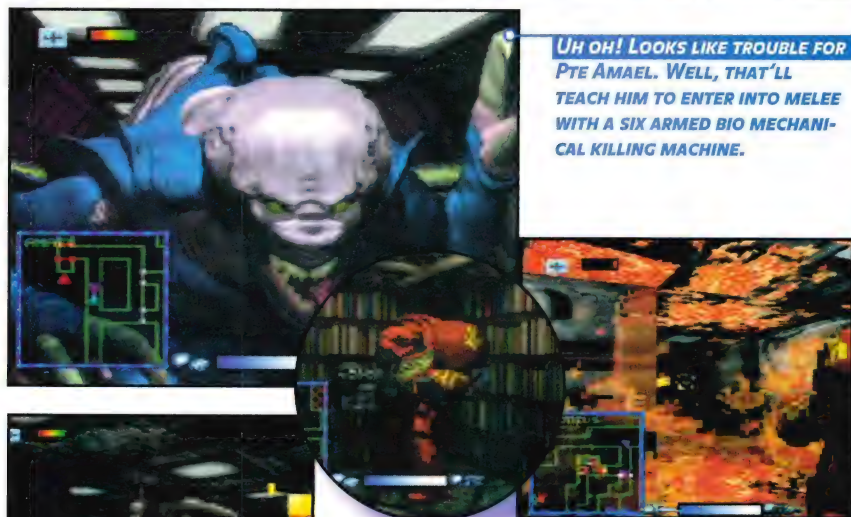


Experienced Terminators are entitled to carry a tertiary weapon in addition to the Power Glove and Storm Bolter: the Grenade Launcher. Mounted in the Power Glove, it carries six high powered fragmentation grenades, which explode on impact with either wall or creature to damage anything in the immediate vicinity.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

From the title screen players can choose between either the Vigil or the Campaign Game (represented by two doors). The Vigil provides a set of pre-determined simulations, including Space Hulk Originals (missions from the board game), Classic Missions (from the original PC game), and training missions

to familiarise you with the combat and command system. The Campaign game, on the other hand, is an ongoing series of missions that you must attempt in a linear order, saving your position to memory card. In the campaign game you start as a solitary marine, and must earn the right to command a company.



ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST. BUT THERE'S PLENTY MORE WHERE HE CAME FROM.

CHAOS SPACE MARINES

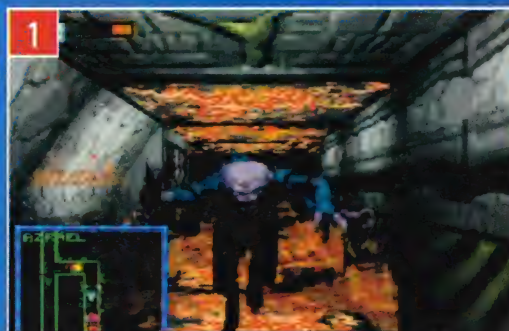


Thousands of years ago the Emperor's authority was challenged by his right-hand man, Warmaster Horus, who had fallen prey to the evil influence of Chaos. Horus and his forces were eventually defeated, but some of his Chaos Marines escaped and formed an un-easy alliance with the Genestealers. Gun these heretics down where they stand!

MEET THE BROOD

Unfortunately, Purestrain Genestealers aren't the only enemies you'll encounter lurking in the depths of the Space Hulk. The further you get into the game, the more formidable the opponents become, until ultimately you will battle with such mighty foes as the hive mind Patriarch.

PURESTRAIN GENESTEALER



The purest form of the alien race, these are the most common enemies that you will encounter in the Space Hulks. Cased in a heavy carapace that can turn aside Storm Bolter shells, Purestrain's nevertheless move at an alarming speed and specialise in close quarter combat.

HYBRIDS



A hybrid is the offspring of the host species infected with the Genestealer genetic material. In the case of humans the infected offspring is humanoid in appearance, but with pale skin and a bulbous head. Their puny bodies make them weaker foes than their Purestrain brethren, whilst their higher intelligence allows them to carry projectile weapons such as Bolters.

MAGUS

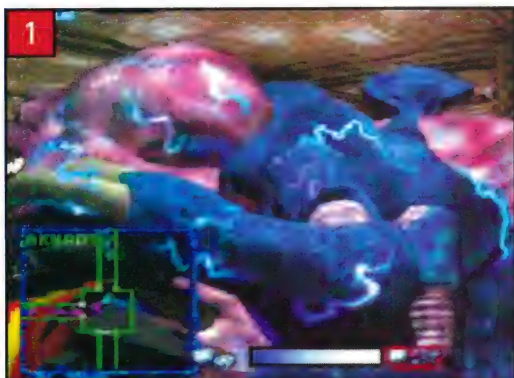


By the time a hybrid brood has reached the fourth of fifth generation, the inherent human potential to develop psychic powers sometimes makes itself felt. Hybrid psykers are extremely intelligent and dangerous opponents, and attack with psychic powers that both jam your weapons and cause the surrounding area to burst into flames. Rare, but to be treated with respect.

GETTING PERSONAL

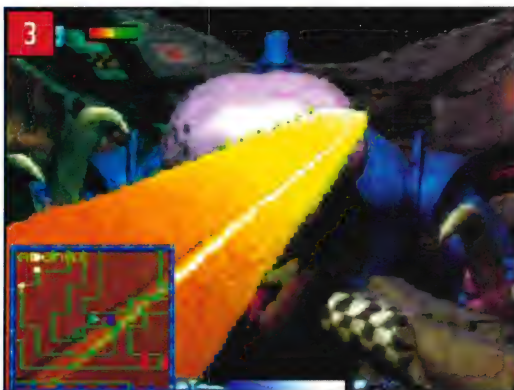
The Purestrain Genestealer (the Terminator's most common adversary) only attack at close range, and

POWER GLOVE



The Power Glove compliments the Storm Bolter as the other half of the standard issue Terminator equipment. Essentially, it is a large and powerful hydraulic fist that also contains a powerfield device, which surrounds the glove with an aura of crackling energy.

POWER SWORD



Terminator Sergeants and Captains usually carry a Power Sword in place of the usual Power Glove. The Sword contains a powerfield similar to the Power Glove, though here it enhances the weapons razor sharp blade, making it possible to slice through the Genestealers chitinous carapace like a razor-blade through margarine.

LIGHTNING CLAWS



The second close combat weapon is a pair of lightning claws. Consisting of four claw-like blades mounted on each arm, each blade is sheathed in a powerfield that generates as much energy as a Power Glove. A slash from one set of these claws can be compared to being hit by four Power Swords at once (!) and naturally they make monster salad out any Genestealer who happens to get caught in the swing.

as such the Marines need some pretty natty kit to help defend against the bio-mechanical onslaught.

CHAIN FIST



One of the problems Terminators encounter on Space Hulks are impassable bulkheads. To cope with this problem the Adeptus Titanicus designed the Chain Fist, a large heavy duty titanium chainsaw attached to a power fist which is effective for both carving through bulk heads and Genestealer armour.

THUNDER HAMMER AND STORM SHIELD



In certain circumstances the company Commander may elect for one or more of his squad to dispense entirely with his ranged weapons and instead arm up with one of two special close combat weapon combinations. The first – the hammer and shield – is cumbersome, but capable of delivering a crushing blow to an unguarded Genestealer skull.

COMMENT

STEVE

Initially I thought to myself that *Space Hulk* was little more than a rather sluggish

Doom clone which had pretensions of being an RPG in places. However, as the claustrophobic tunnels are explored, the atmosphere and general strategic tips and tactics start to fall into place, and before long I found myself enjoying the game immensely. Graphically, the game is a strange beast. The sprites, animation and backdrops are all impressive, with the weapons deserving praise for their appearance. However, the scrolling of the corridors is stilted and a little slow, reducing some of the game's urgency. Similarly, the aliens attack in hordes and this can make all the hard work of getting to them wasted when you are killed within mere seconds of their arrival. That said, it was the missions that got me into *Space Hulk* – sending mates off to their doom was all part of the fun while also increasing the aforementioned strategic element. If *Defcon 5* failed to light your cerebral tendencies, I recommend you get to grips with *Space Hulk* and its varied tasks.

COMMENT

ALEX

It's really inevitable that *Space Hulk* will be compared with *Doom*, and on initial appearances it fails pretty badly. The control is stilted, the level's are all flat, and the game runs at a snails pace, when compared with id's seminal blastathon. However, persevere with the game and it soon becomes apparent that beneath the *Doom*-style exterior hides a decent action/strategy game just dying to get out. Planning your squad's moves on the map provides a new spin on a well worn genre, and once you get the hang of the command interface you'll soon be flipping between the two game screens, dishing out orders to a fellow marine before leaping into another one's boots for some close quarter combat. The graphics and sound are above average (up close the Genestealers are particularly nice – as you can see) Admittedly the demanding gameplay is not to everyone's taste, but for those who've got the stomach for the strategy (and the long loading times!), *Space Hulk* can be a very original and rewarding experience.

RATING

GRAPHICS	82
ANIMATION	79
SOUND FX	81
MUSIC	83
PLAYABILITY	87
OVERALL	83

84

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GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: N/A

RELEASE JULY
PRICE £44.95
BY WARNER
PLAYERS 1-2



As developers strive to steer PlayStation games into previously uncharted waters, genre is being merged with genre in a bizarre cross pollination of ideas. *Destruction Derby*, *Floating Runner*, *Cheesy the Mouse*, and *Jumping Flash* have all taken established genres and thrown something old, something new, and numerous borrowed somethings into the equation. In what must be by far the most unusual marriage between game styles to date, Warner Interactive are pleased to announce the birth of a bizarre pairing of shoot 'em up and strategy game.

Think strategy games, and the likes of *Panzer General* spring to mind, along with drab hexagon-filled maps, and minimalist graphics. Similarly, bearing in mind the fans of such games are normally so far removed in terms of taste from the legions of shoot 'em up addicts, ordinarily any cross-bred offspring of the two couldn't be loved by either. That's the theory, anyway. In *Return Fire*, though, we have a game that crosses the genre gap with ease. Part strategy, part shoot 'em up, part unhinged humour, *Return Fire* is quite simply an exercise in playability – and is likely to please fans of any genre as opposed to the aforementioned duo. More surprising, though, is that such praise is being heaped upon a 3DO conversion – indeed, the only good game to grace the ill-fated Panasonic machine (respective converters of *Gex*, *Shockwave Assault*, and *Total Eclipse* please take note).

So join us on the battlefield as war breaks out, and where the only casualties are going to be a few dozen lost hours...

Return Fire



BOMB THE BASE

On first sight *Return Fire* is, to put it bluntly, a bit dull. Having selected your mission from the initial five offered and opted for one of the four vehicle designs contained in your bunker, the game switches to above ground where your tank/humvee/ASV or helicopter is seen awaiting your command against a sparse landscape made up of three-quarters sand, and a quarter of buildings and trees. Using the Dpad to steer the vehicle across the eight-way-scrolling landscape, the mission is as simple as the aesthetics – capture the

enemy flag. This seemingly innocuous piece of green cloth is the symbol of power of the unnamed enemy, and getting it back to base results in their complete subservience and entry to the next stage. Of course, things are never this simple, and as the game progresses, so the breadth of the islands, and the size of the enemy's IQ, grow making the missions considerably harder, and leading to the mother of all battles as the survivors group against each other for the hundredth, and final, stage.





THE SIZE OF EXPLOSIONS IS IN PROPORTION TO THE BUILDING'S CONTENTS — WITH AMMO DUMPS GOING UP PARTICULARLY WELL.

COMMENT

MATT

The fact that the instruction manual refers to the one-player game as a training mode only goes further to prove the point that *Return Fire* works best as a two player game. Though challenging as a one-player (constantly trying to improve on your previous time records) it's only when playing against a mate that you get *really* angry! Lure your opponent after what they think is a crippled craft, drop a mine, turn around, and attack! Oh, games just don't get much better than this. I realise it doesn't look like the hottest thing ever, but if you enjoy a sprinkling of strategy with your action games, you really ought to look deeper than the surface. You'll find a truly corking little game to enjoy.

ONE CAREFUL OWNER

The player begins each level with a full complement of three of each vehicle. Each of the four types is equipped with a limited supply of ground level and air-to-air missiles, and the vehicles are automatically restocked and rearmed when they are returned to base. For the sake of speed, though, pressing all four face buttons activates a self-destruct button, and transfers the player from the wreckage back to the bunker.

HELICOPTER:

Armed with anti-armour missiles, the helicopter is fast and thus useful for taking out gun turrets while recce-ing the area.

Ammo: 100 Shells, 50 Missiles

Strengths:

- + Airborne, so impervious to ground obstacles
- + Capable of destroying mines
- + Powerful missiles: two hits destroy an object as opposed to five

Weaknesses:

- Limited armour
- Repeated hits affect control and steering
- Needs constant refuelling
- Can only rearm from bunker
- Slow to turn

ASV:

Sports stronger armour than any other vehicle but is considerably slower as a result. Can lay mines in two-player mode.

Ammo: 100 Missiles, 10 Mines

Strengths:

- + Armour allows it to withstand 26 hits
- + Powerful weaponry. Three hits destroy a tower.
- + Mine-laying capabilities

Weaknesses:

- Slow
- Fires slower than any other vehicle
- Guzzles fuel

HUMVEE:

Created specially for its speed and the only vehicle which can be used to collect the flag. One hit destroys the Humvee, though, dropping the flag when it explodes.

Ammo: 16 Grenades

Strengths:

- + The only vehicle that can carry the flag
- + Very fast
- + Can drive over deep water by inflating its tyres — Chitty-Chitty Bang-Bang style

Weaknesses:

- No armour. One hit destroys it
- Minimal firepower. Five grenades to destroy a tower

TANK:

The greatest all-rounder in the game. Its revolving turret (effected using the L1 and R1 buttons) allow it to fire in any direction while moving.

Ammo: 150 Shells

Strengths:

- + Relatively nippy
- + Rapid and powerful firing
- + Rotating tower for 360 degree cover

Weaknesses:

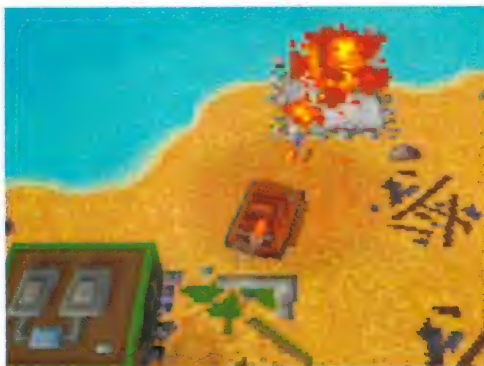
- Slightly weaker armour than ASV. 19 hits destroy it
- Five shots needed to destroy tower



VIEW TO A KILL

As the vehicles battle it out, an automatic camera tracking system pans in and out for the best views of the action. As such, if the player is approaching a seemingly quiet area the view is extended to take in as much of the surrounding area as possible. Similarly, during the heat of battle the view closes in on the helicopter to assist the player in aiming their missiles. With so many neat little graphical flourishes, the camera occasionally fails to pick up on something, so the L2 and R2 buttons also act as a makeshift zoom mode, allowing the real pedants to scrutinise every frame of action as the Humvee replaces its tyres with the air cushion that allow it to float across water.

THE HELICOPTER IS THE MOST AGILE OF THE VEHICLES, BUT ITS MOVEMENT IS IMPAIRED WITH EVERY HIT IT TAKES, MAKING IT QUITE UNWILY DURING BATTLE.



I LOVE THE SMELL OF NAPALM...

One of the most bizarre features in *Return Fire* is the eclectic snatches of music accompanying the battle. Each vehicle is given a signature tune which is played during key sections of the game. As the helicopters soar towards the enemy camp, for example, memories of *Apocalypse Now* are evoked as Wagner's *Flight of the Valkyries*, while the nippiness of the Humvee as it skids around corners with the flag attached to the back is accentuated with a quick rendition of the William Tell Overture (or the music from *The Lone Ranger* as everyone knows it). Despite the off-beat nature of its inclusion, the music slots in perfectly with the action and adds a frenetic feel to the proceedings – and always manages to get interest from passersby.



THE LUCKIEST MAN ALIVE

The trend for bizarre additions to the battles continues when the battle is one. For reasons known only to the developers victory is rewarded by short snippet of digitised footage as baseball superstar, Joe DeMaggio tells us he is the luckiest man on Earth. The reason for its inclusion is beyond us, but it manages to raise a smile every time.



LOST IN BATTLE

War is hell, and *Return Fire* revels in its wanton destruction. Whenever a building is bombarded with shells, it collapses into a pile of rubble while fuel dumps explode into plumes of flame, and watch towers topple over. On destroying a building, small soldier sprites scatter in every direction – occasionally lobbing the odd grenade as they leg it – and those with a 'take no prisoners' policy can trundle over the fleeing men, crushing them into a red puddle. Alternatively, become the scourge of campsites all over the world by driving into an enemy base, taking out their gun towers, and then driving over the tents containing reinforcements. Fun for all budding psychotics, and rewarding the tank-based maniac with a satisfying squelching noise.

WHEN TWO TRIBES GO TO WAR

Continuing the welcome trend of two-player games, *Return Fire* really comes into its own when a second player takes to the field. Splitting the screen vertically, the challenge of capturing the enemy flag becomes considerably tougher, as the wily machinations of an unpredictable friend makes for a considerably more involved game. As the player sends their vehicles into battle, running battles between the mine-laying ASVs and 'copter dogfights become the order of the day, with tactics more necessary than ever as the duelling pair go to war. Prolific, the game's developers admit that the one-player stages are little more than a warm up to the dual-player mode, and any tactics learned during the 100 stages will be called for as two practised *Return Fire* veterans go to war. Quite simply, *Return Fire* is the perfect example of a two-player game. No matter how well a CPU IQ is plotted, there is never a better match than a human opponent and *Return Fire*'s complex maps and array of vehicles makes for a conflict which is set to outlast the 100-year war.



THE TWO-PLAYER MODE IN RETURN FIRE IS ONE OF THE BEST OF ITS KIND.



INTELLIGENCE REPORT

The aim of every mission is to seize the enemy's flag and make it back to the bunker in one piece. Along the way there are plenty of opportunities for wanton destruction, but these are the key objects to keep an eye open for:



The Flag Tower:

Each stage plays host to a number of these buildings, and each must be destroyed until the flag is retrieved. Clues as to which tower contains the flag can be attained by using a helicopter to see which is the most heavily guarded.



Gun Turrets:

The path to the flags are lined with these. If the player ambles up while the turret guns are firing in the opposite direction, several direct hits can be scored before it turns and retaliates. All towers must be cleared before the Humvee may pass.



Enemy Drones:

A rarity, but attack if the player's vehicle remains static for too long. The drones pick up on any non-moving signals on their radar, and immediately home in for the kill. Returning to the bunker or shooting them is the only way to avert their attack.

THE BOTTOM HALF OF THE SCREEN IS NORMALLY COVERED IN CRAFT DETAILS (FUEL, ETC), BUT THIS CAN BE REMOVED FOR A BETTER OVERVIEW.



The Flag:

For reasons unknown, the enemy drop all weapons if their flag is stolen and secured by the enemy. As such, the tanks and helicopters are used to reach the flag, while the Humvee is wheeled out to take it back to the bunker.



The Bunker:

Impervious to all attack, and the home to the player's twelve vehicles. The bunker can be returned to for repairs and rearming, with the player parking directly on its entrance, and which point the doors will flash to indicate they can be opened with a press of the circular button.



Fuel/Ammo Depots:

If any of the ground-based vehicles are running low on supplies, moving the vehicle next to one of these will replenish lost supplies. A ping effect indicates that stores have been taken on board. Helicopters, however, must return to base to restock.



COMMENT

STEVE

The renewed interest in two-player games can only be a good thing, and *Return Fire* ranks alongside *Bust A Move 2* as one of the best to date. Once again, the premise is very simple, but the execution of the missions and the content of each is perfectly balanced. While the second player is hunting the flag, the other can be laying waste to their gun towers and laying mines, while waiting for the Humvee to return to a hostile ASV reception. Surprisingly, the game is every bit as playable on your tod, too, with the missions slightly repetitive, but requiring great skill to battle through to the final conflict. While PlayStation snobs will bemoan the lack of aesthetic appeal, *Return Fire* follows the lead set by *Worms* and the aforementioned *Bust A Move 2* and plumps for pure playability. That said, the snatches of classical music are inspirational, and the rendition of *Flight of the Valkyries* had us in stitches. All in all, a superb game to have your mates over for – and then slaughter them – and one of the greatest multi-player games of all time.

RATING

GRAPHICS	76
ANIMATION	54
SOUND FX	68
MUSIC	92
LASTABILITY	89
PLAYABILITY	92
OVERALL	91



REVIEW



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
CONTINUOUS: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE JULY

PRICE £44.95

BY CODEMASTERS

PLAYERS 1-4

Sampras Extreme Tennis



he current wunderkind of the tennis scene, 'Pistol' Pete Sampras (so named after his fierce serving speeds) has reigned supreme over the game for nearly five years now, becoming the fourth player to become the top seed for three consecutive years, and winning virtually every tournament the game offers. The cash benefits have been huge, with the Sampras bank accounts brimming with over \$21 million dollars amassed in his short career. Now, with Codemasters about to release the second Sampras licensed game for the Megadrive, they are also expanding their horizons into the PlayStation field, choosing *Sampras Extreme Tennis* as their first release in the Sony market.

Codemasters pride themselves on placing playability before aesthetics in their games, so their basic aim with *Sampras Extreme Tennis* was to mix arcade playability with all the shots and surfaces 32bit owners expect of their 'Next Gen' titles. As such, while the smashes, lobs and slices are limited to the four face buttons, an intelligent control system means the shots will be precisely tailored depending on the height of the ball and the length the button is depressed. In a nod to the 32bit system's power, though, Codemasters have augmented the game's appearance with the addition of motion-captured sprites and courts which can be viewed from a selection of predetermined angles. Thus, with Ocean's *Power Serve Tennis* revealed to be a dated Fred Perry of a game, it falls to Pete Sampras to lift another trophy as Codemasters vie for accolade of the premier PlayStation tennis title.



AROUND THE WORLD

Nineteen players are available from the player selection screen and, having elected a potential champion, the player is invited to participate in one of eight competitions. These fictitious events take place all over the world, and also add a number of attractive backdrops to the usual selection of both indoor and outdoor court surfaces. Pete Sampras acts as the final challenger in each of the tournaments, and game positions can be stored on a memory card.

CAM AND GET IT

Pausing the game reveals a sub-menu from which the camera views may be switched. The default Fixed mode oversees the action from a distant raised point from one end of the court, but the secondary Fixed points offer higher view-points for a better court overview. There are also three Ball Track modes wherein the ball is kept central at all times, while a television view pans around to ensure the best action coverage at all times. Finally, the Align mode shifts around to keep both player sprites in track, while the First Person mode may not be the most conducive to fast play, but at least allows the user to view the game through their sprite's eyes!

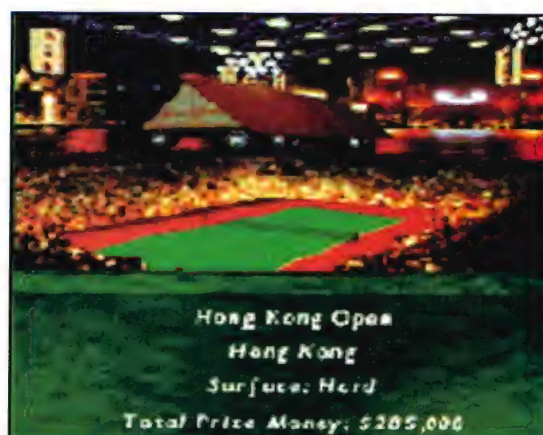


THE FIRST-PERSON VIEW MAKES PLAY VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE, BUT LOOKS SUPERB.

SURFACE HARD LOCATION OUTDOOR
BARCELONA GRAND PRIX
STADIUM NACIONAL, BARCELONA



SURFACE HARD LOCATION OUTDOOR
HONG KONG OPEN
TAI HANG BAY, HONG KONG



SURFACE ARTIFICIAL GRASS LOCATION OUTDOOR
AUSTRALIAN OPEN
CANOOBA CREEK STADIUM, MELBOURNE

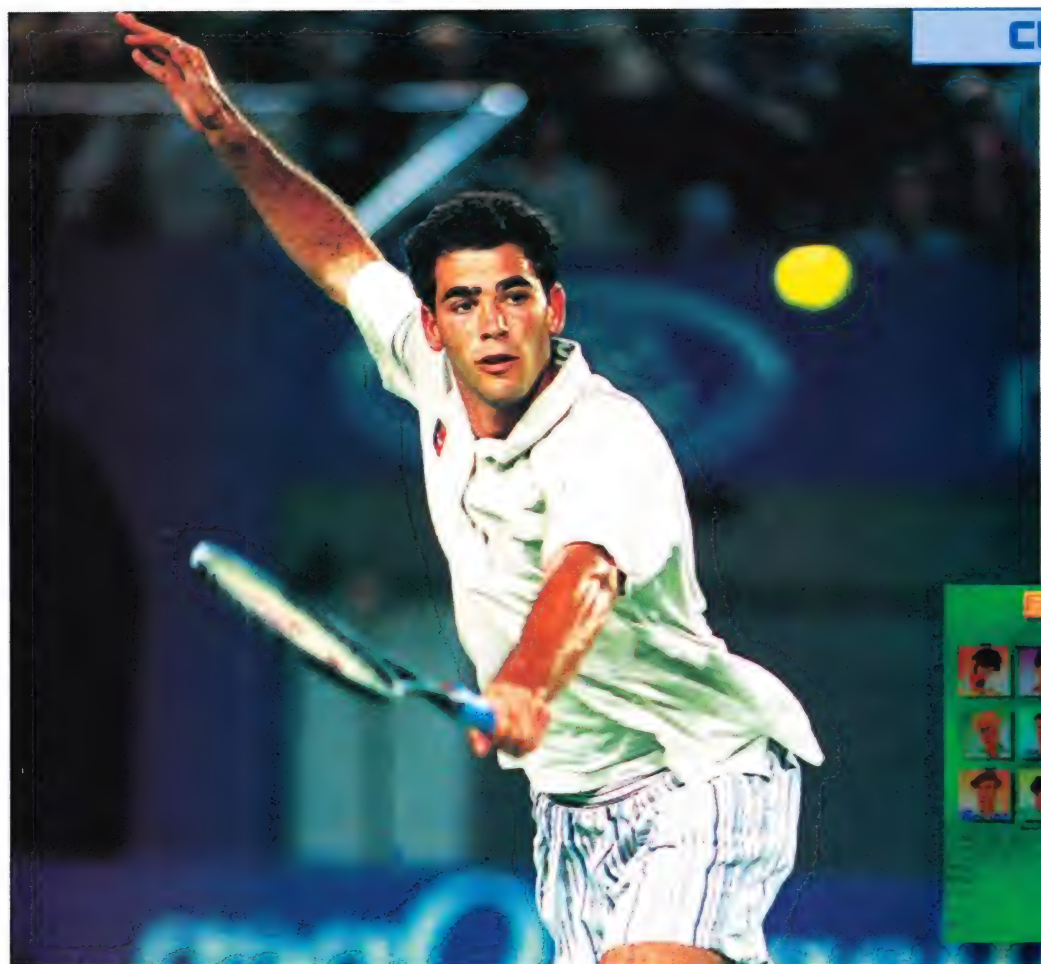


SURFACE CLAY LOCATION OUTDOOR
FRENCH OPEN
STADE OLIVIER ROUX, PARIS



CUSTOM BUILT

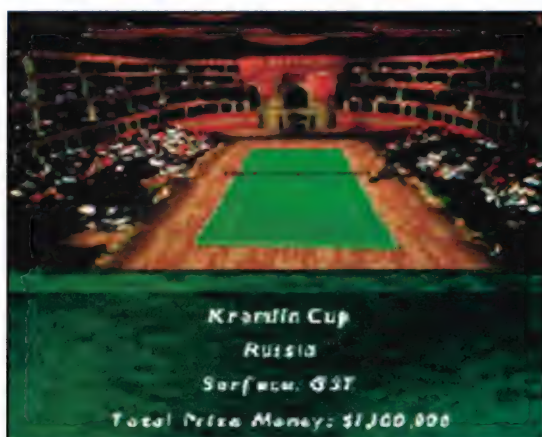
Should the players on offer not meet with approval (and some of the doubles partners leave a lot to be desired), Extreme also features an option to create a new entrant by customising one of the existing seeds. Each player is basically built up from a number of attributes – running speed, shot strength, serve speed, serve top spin, dive range, and dive recovery time – and a number of markers indicate the current character's strengths and weaknesses in these departments. By reallocating these, players can be moulded into good all-rounders or strong in particular areas. Again, results can be saved to a memory card.



SURFACE HARD **LOCATION** INDOOR
FRANKFURT CHAMPIONSHIPS
 DER STAATSTADE, FRANKFURT



SURFACE HARD **LOCATION** INDOOR
KREMLIN CUP
 PALACE OF THE CONGRESSES,
 KREM, MOSCOW



COMMENT

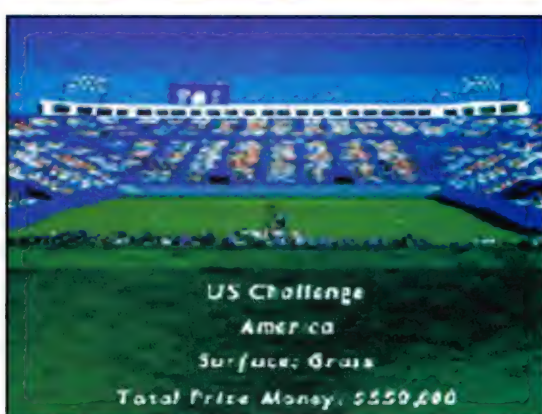
GARY

I could never claim to be the most sporty person, yet I find myself enjoying PlayStation sport sims more and more. This manages to make tennis interesting, and its variety of shots and play features seem guaranteed to involve even the most ardent Wimbledon hater. The CPU players offer a real challenge, and the sound effects and FMV sequences add to an already very impressive title. I'm not sure about its longevity, but is the perfect game for the odd match against a mate.

SURFACE GRASS **LOCATION** OUTDOOR
LONDON OPEN
 PUTNEY ARENA, LONDON



SURFACE GRASS **LOCATION** OUTDOOR
US OPEN
 FLUSHING MEADOWS, NEW YORK



HIDDEN PLEASURES

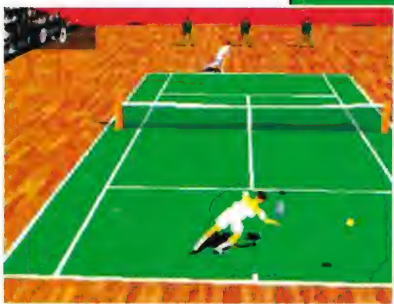
In addition to the nineteen players on offer, *Sampras Extreme Tennis* contains four rather unusual hidden entrants. The route to playing this oddball quartet won't be revealed until the game has been on sale for a month or so, but we can reveal that the four are a pink-clad pimp (complete with large felt hat), a leather clad dominatrix, a guy resembling Jay from Jamiroquai and

a punk woman sporting a foot-high mohican. Despite their unlikely outfits, though, the hidden characters are all based on Pete Sampras' abilities, ranking them among the top seeds in the game. Similarly, also hidden away is a secret 'street' court where the aforementioned pimp and his associates can take on the world's finest on their own territory.



COURTING SUCCESS

Sampras Extreme Tennis uses an intelligent control system which determines the strength and angle of a return by the length the shot button is depressed and the position of the player sprite. The face buttons are used to slice, lob and smash — in addition to a standard return — while the position of the bounce can be altered by moving the Dpad as the shot is prepared. The system allows for perfectly positioned smashes, slices across the net, and superb fast-paced rallies towards the front and back of the court. Serving also follows this pattern, with three different serve speeds effected via the ■, ● and X buttons. Service is initiated by pressing one of the three buttons whereupon a blue cursor flicks across the court. The Dpad is used to position the cursor in the opponent service area, while a secondary press of the button finishes the serve — hopefully within the area.



STARRING ED BISHOP

On hand with biting comments and information on the forthcoming tournaments is Codemasters' version of Des Lynam (played by Ed Bishop — Ed Straker in Gerry Anderson's *UFO* series), and his fictitious ex-pro pundits, Jim Smash and Major Duffer. Just before each match, the trio chat, set the scene and detail the players' strengths and weaknesses — often disagreeing in the age-old

fashion set by Jimmy Hill and Alan Hansen on *Match of the Day*. With Duffer preferring a more slow and skilful game and Smash (obviously) a fan of Aces and one-shot victories, the pair are constantly at loggerheads and the skits invariably end with one of the pair tossing a sarcastic comment across before 'Des' introduces the next round of the tournament.



COMMENT

STEVE

Let's face it, after *Power Serve* and *V-*

tennis, *Sampras Extreme Tennis* only had to be marginally better to take the title of 'supreme PlayStation champion.' Thankfully, Codemasters have pulled out all the stops, and Pete's 32bit debut is every bit as playable as the Megadrive original. The real joy is the ease of play. The shot system is incredibly instinctive, with smashes and lobs pulled off with ease, and net play requiring all the fast reflexes of the real thing. Every aspect of the game is polished until it shines. The motion-capture works well without affecting the play speed, and the sound changes to suit every mood — the crowd even gasp if the ball tips the net! The assorted views are pleasant, but the default mode is still the most useful, and the 3D rotations are little more than nice extras. *Sampras Extreme Tennis* still suffers from the repetitive nature of real tennis, but the latter players are extremely hard to beat, and this will certainly ensure that *Sampras Extreme Tennis* will keep most armchair McEnroes busy until Wimbledon.

RATING

GRAPHICS	88
ANIMATION	91
SOUND FX	85
MUSIC	79
LASTABILITY	87
PLAYABILITY	90
OVERALL	89





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GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVE
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE JULY

PRICE £44.95

BY OCEAN

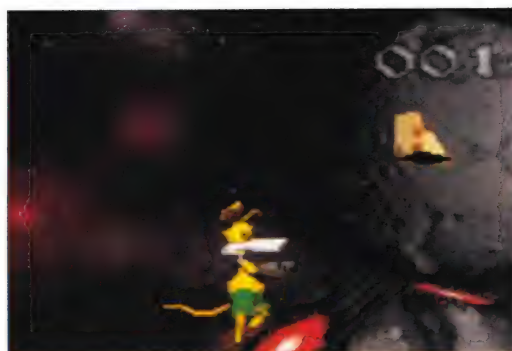
PLAYERS 1



The quest for the PlayStation's equivalent to Sonic and Mario has so far seen casualties in the shape of Rayman and Johnny Bazoorkatone, while Sony themselves are about to unveil Crash Bandicoot who they are using to take on Nintendo's N64 Mario excursion head-to-head. As we await Crash's imminent Sony arrival, however, Ocean are the latest softco to step up with a possible figurehead for the machine — namely Cheesy the Mouse.

As is often the case in video game scenarios, Cheesy begins the game imprisoned in a small wooden cage, readied for experimentation by the villain of the piece, one Doctor Chem. Chem has wired the wheel in Cheesy's cage to a power converter, and forces the rodent to run at full pelt all day to provide enough energy for his foul experiments. As such, controlling Cheesy, the player's main aim is to flee Chem's castle and escape to the outside world — but to do this he must gather the ingredients needed for a spell to immobilise Chem. In true platform game fashion, this entails traversing thirty, enemy-filled stages and numerous 'boss' creatures, who patrol the castle's libraries, kitchens and roof. And, conveniently, killing the bosses rewards Cheesy with one of the spell's ingredients.

Thankfully, though, Cheesy has a number of useful items on hand to make his escape mission a little easier, and these include a handgun which kills off all known enemies, and occasional use of a number of modes of transport — including the now obligatory platform game mine cart and a rather more unusual flying saucer.



AS WITH ALL THE GREATEST VIDEO GAMES CHARACTERS, CHEESY SKIDS TO A HALT AFTER RUNNING. TITTER.

Cheesy



THE OBLIGATORY MINE LEVELS ARE INHABITED BY AN ASSORTMENT OF INSECTS AND SPIKED BEASTS.



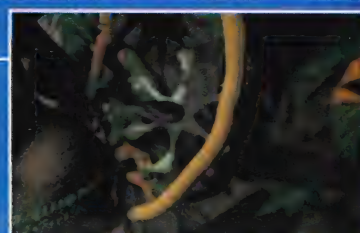
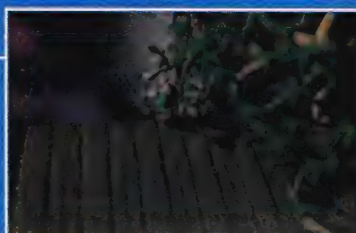
I CAMEMBERT IT ANYMORE

Think about mice, and cheese is probably the most immediate word that will spring to mind. Thus, in the best tradition of every platform game since Mario's first, Cheesy's escape mission is supplemented by a secondary aim of collecting as many pieces of cheese as feasibly possible. The fragments of fromage are found floating around the many rooms of Chem's domain, and the number Cheesy has gathered is noted at the left-hand corner at the top of the screen — with one hundred slices adding an extra life to our hero's inventory. Similarly, rendered copies of Cheesy's head have also been scattered throughout the areas and these add an extra life without the need for extensive cheese collation.



IN BETWEEN DAYS

Linking key parts of the game are rendered sequences which develop the plot. For example, before Cheesy drops down into the sewers for his leaf-surfing excursion, a rendered sequence shows the plucky mouse looking down into the coursing water. Similarly, finding the chimney entrance or stumbling across the flying saucer are similarly introduced via a rendered sequence.

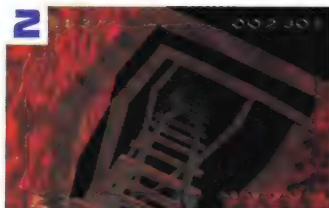




THE ROOFTOP CHASE SEES OUR HERO PURSUED BY A FIRE-BREATHING DRAGON.

THE THIRD DIMENSION

As if showing off their 3D handling during the platform stages was not enough, Cheesy's developers have add a series of 3D sub-stages to add variety to the game's thirty stages. The first of these drops Cheesy onto a leaf being carried through an obstacle-laden sewer by a powerful current. Moving the Dpad in the relevant direction, Cheesy is steered past the bricks and fences which threaten to knock him from his makeshift raft, while fish swim from below and flip back in an attempt to dislodge him. At a later point, the leaf is discarded in favour of an Indiana Jones-style mine cart. This section is viewed through Cheesy's eyes with the player moving the Dpad left and right to tip the cart to one side to avoid the broken rails. By far the most impressive section, however, has been saved until last. Cheesy eventually stumbles across a flying saucer Chem has been working on, and the PlayStation's 3D handling capabilities are tested to the hilt. Although the player has no control over the saucer's route, the level requires pixel-perfect timing in order to make the renegade rodent duck away from the chandeliers and wall fittings which jut out from all angles. The effect is nothing short of stunning, and the speed at which the objects are moved makes the likes of *Agile Warrior* and its kind look positively dated.



THE SCREEN UPDATES DURING THE 3D STAGES IS INCREDIBLE — MOST NOTABLY DURING THE SCENES FEATURING THE FLYING SAUCER.

HERE BE DRAGONS

Chem's castle is governed by specially-bred mutants who act as 'bosses' during the game, and are also in possession of the ingredients needed for our hero's home-grown spell. Of, course, with Ocean flexing their 3D muscles, the bosses Cheesy encounters are far from the bland over-large sprites Rayman faced. Instead, each boss offers a different attack pattern and way to defeat it.

DRAGON:

As Cheesy bounces left and right on a trampoline made out of a spider's web, the dragon hovers in the background, spewing fire at the bouncing lab pet. Cheesy must then fire at the dragon with his trusty pistol, until the monster eventually falls from the sky.



SPIDER:

With an idea blatantly nicked from Shiny Entertainment's *Earthworm Jim 2*, Cheesy finds himself attached to a bungee cord alongside a spider boss. As the two plunge into a rocky chasm, Cheesy's aim is to shoot the spider so he bumps into the rough edges. Eventually the arachnid's web snaps, and Cheesy wins the day.



REMINISCENT OF EWJ2, IS THAT VIRGIN'S LAWYERS I CAN HEAR?

KETTLE:

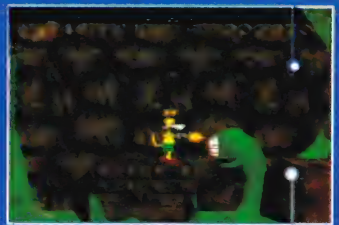
This time the boss is seen from above, and is revealed to be a huge iron kettle. As it leaps across the small play area, Cheesy legs it underneath and has a few seconds to loose off a handful of shots before the kettle fires scalding steam towards him. Again, plentiful shots are the order of the day.



THE KETTLE'S STEAM PROVES FATAL.

SLIME:

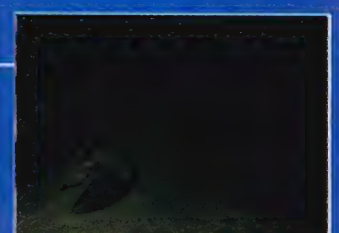
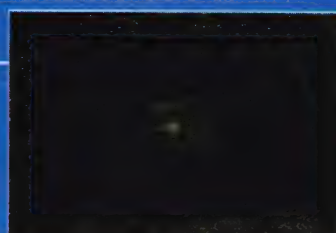
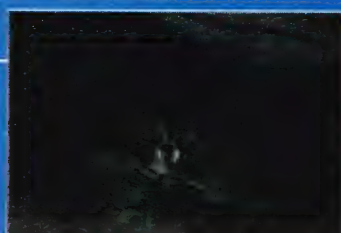
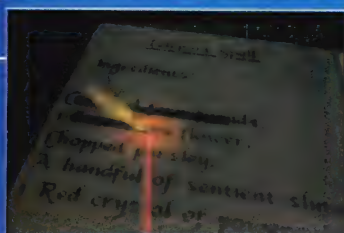
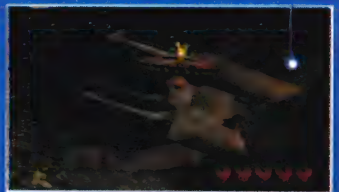
Cheesy is left stranded on a crate surrounded by slime, and every now and then a monster's eye emerges from the goo to spit energy-sapping projectiles at our hero. As the eye appears, Cheesy must blast away until it retracts and eventually explodes, killing the slimy beast in the process.



SHOOT HIM IN THE EYE...

DOCTOR CHEM:

The final obstacle, but by now Cheesy should have gathered the items needed for the spell. Seated within the flying saucer he found earlier, Cheesy zooms around the 3D Chem sprite firing away until he gets a chance to gain revenge for his spell behind bars.





A FINE EXAMPLE OF THE CORNERING TECHNIQUE IN ACTION.

COMMENT

MATT

Truth be known, I was expecting *Cheesy the Mouse* to be a pile of poo. Thankfully, Ocean have pleasantly surprised us all by producing a rather interesting little platform romp. My only seriously negative thought being that I was more taken by the 3D sections (the river, the mine carts, etc) than the general platform sections — which I actually found a bit slow and teetering dangerously close to frustrating at certain points. While *Mickey's Wild Adventure* probably remains the best 'traditional' platform game I've seen on the PlayStation, *Cheesy the Mouse* easily beats the likes of *Johnny Bazzookatone* and *Rayman* as far as combining 'Next Gen' graphics and interesting game play goes. Some clever ideas are in there just waiting to be discovered.



THE MINE CART LEVEL IS SUPERB, AND SHOWCASES THE PLAYSTATION'S 3D ABILITIES MAGNIFICENTLY.

MICE AND EASY DOES IT

For the most part, Cheesy's running and jumping antics are viewed from the side, although this skating description fails to the game's graphics any true justice. Whereas the likes of *Mario*, *Sonic*, *Rayman* et al present their hero and his surrounding area as flat, 2D objects, Dr Chem's castle is a pseudo-3D affair and rendered throughout. As Cheesy marches over the assorted kitchen and lab utensils towards the end of each stage, the screen can be tilted up and down to allow the little mouse to see what's above or below, while turning a corner initiates a far flashier effect wherein the whole screen follows the corner around! The greatest example of Ocean's 3D trickery, however, is revealed in the library level. As Cheesy is left to wander through a maze of books, an alien spaceship can be seen hovering in the background. If Cheesy remains in line with the ship it will fire a gun, thus removing part of the mouse's health supply, so the level remains a constant battle of keeping an eye out for meanies hiding within the book shelves while simultaneously staying out of the ship's line of fire.



COMMENT

STEVE

Ocean are pitching *Cheesy the Mouse* at a young audience, but I feel it is a little too difficult for the more junior player. *Cheesy the Mouse* abounds with nice touches, and graphically and aurally I cannot praise it enough. In these days of *Rayman*, it's nice to play a game which is essentially simple yet looks like it's testing the Sony hardware. As Cheesy hides from a hovering spaceship in the background, or tears through a colliery in a mine cart, not only do you get the feeling of a very playable and enjoyable game, but the graphics are enough to think you're getting your money's worth, too. The sound deserves a special mention, too, as the assorted effects are perfect, with all the noises you'd expect of a cutesy platformer. There is a downside to the game of course — it can be very frustrating. Energy is often lost in impossible situations and considering Ocean consider the game suitable for a younger clientele, I'm surprised the player isn't weaned into the harder levels. That said, *Cheesy the Mouse* is one of the most playable platform games in ages.

RATING

GRAPHICS	90
ANIMATION	83
SOUND FX	87
MUSIC	83
LASTABILITY	84
PLAYABILITY	81
OVERALL	82



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GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: N/A

RELEASE JULY

PRICE £44.95

BY US GOLD

PLAYERS 1-4



ot exactly one of the more memorable Olympic events, US Gold are nevertheless stretching their Atlanta '96 licence into the realms of the games' soccer event, as another Sony kick about is unveiled. As motion-captured sprites, sampled commentators and sweeping camera views become the norm, US Gold have taken a step back and concentrated on playability before aesthetic thrills. As such, while the sprites in *Olympic Soccer* are indeed motion-captured polygons, and Radio 5 Live's Allan Green is on hand with caustic comments and gushing praise, US Gold suggest that their game is probably the most playable and fast-moving of those available.

With the Olympic soccer tournament the domain of the amateur player, the US Gold game offers the very best in non-league talent the usual international elevens have to offer. As such, once again the tricky giants of Brazil will be up against the flat back four of the German side, while England will no doubt be languishing at the bottom of their league as they lose to 'unlucky' goals from the American, Greek and Saudi elevens. If, however, England's fortunes in the Olympic league fail to impress (which, let's face it, is going to be similar to our trials in Euro '96), *Olympic Soccer* is equipped with a full array of tournament options, while the casual player is invited to plump for a simpler arcade mode which replaces the passing and skilful full game with a considerably simpler kick and run affair.



Olympic

HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES

Much has been written about the one-touch scoring opportunities, incredibly realistic tackling, and any other football-related actions that can be deemed 'instinctive' when they come into play. Such systems, while innovative and welcome, can often prove rather frustrating when put to the test as *Actua Soccer's* wildly off-centre volleys and *Adidas Power Soccer's* infallible volleys show. *Olympic Soccer*, however, while still boasting the legendary 'instinctive' controls, plays at a more arcade-like speed and thus proves more successful in its attempts at realism. The four facia buttons offer the player complete mastery of the expected passes,

shots and lobs, with the L and R buttons coming into play for nifty back heels and an easy-to-use crossing system. As such, play moves along at a fair old lick, with the length which buttons are depressed used to determine the weighting of passes or lobs, while shots are dependent on the height of the ball when the shoot button is pressed, and the position of the players. The range of moves is also determined by these factors, with turning volleys, diving headers, and last-gasp sliding efforts all possible — while would-be Teddy Sheringhams will battle for mastery of the bicycle kick which is effected using the triangle button.



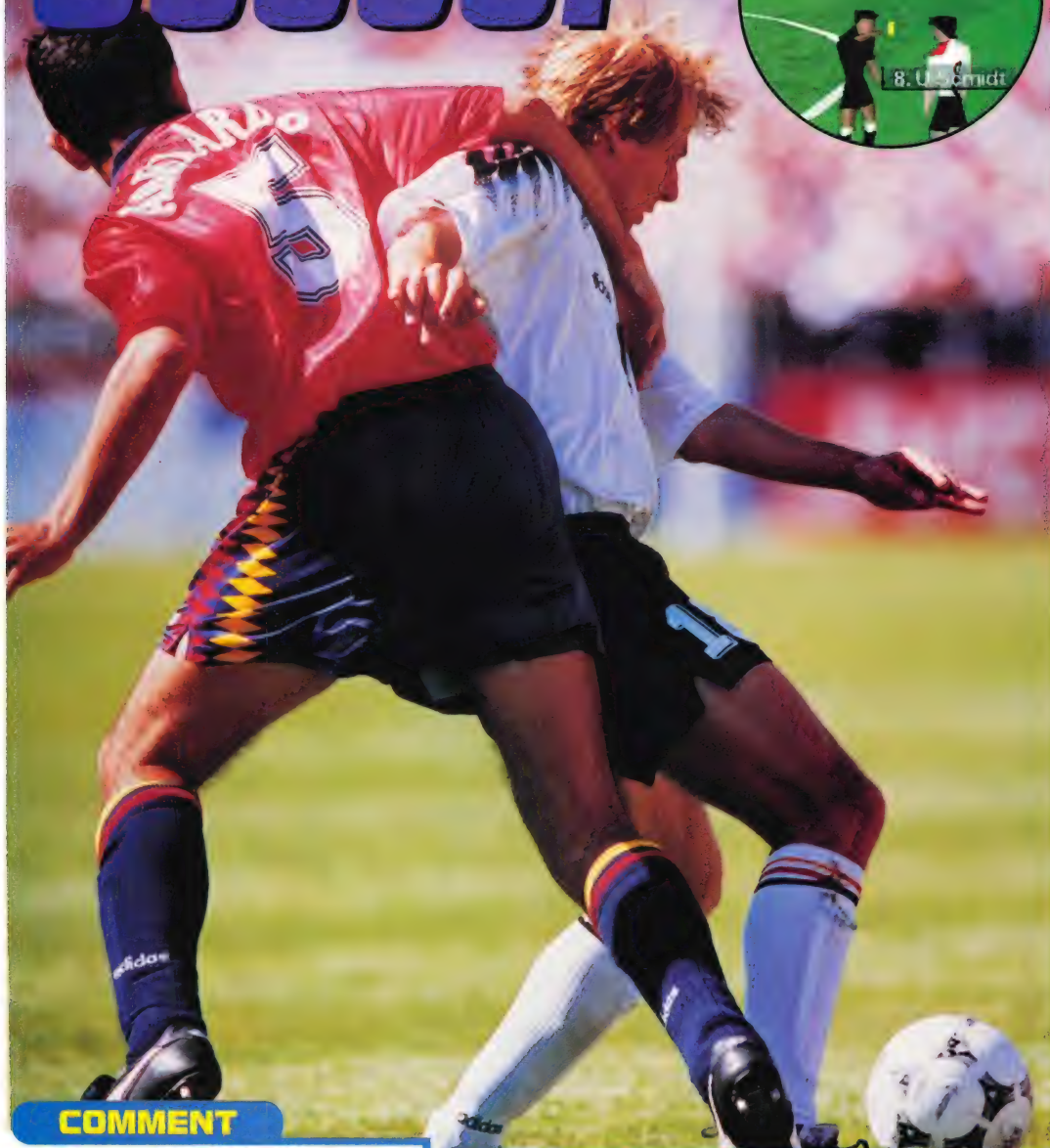
LET'S JUST SEE THAT AGAIN...

With the game featuring goal opportunities the others promise but rarely deliver, *Olympic Soccer* also invites the players to revisit past glories from any view imaginable. While the sprites are considerably smaller than those in past games, all of Olympic's players are polygon generated and thus can be viewed from any angle at any time. Pausing the game during a game allows the player to replace the basic 'floating camera' with one of several fixed

points and angles (goal-based, from a 75-degree angle, etc), while anyone familiar with *Sensible Soccer* on the Amiga will be at home with the overhead view. In addition to the set views, replays have the added bonus of actually allowing the player to move the 'camera' themselves. As such, as the players dive in for last-ditch winners, extreme close-ups follow their every move — repeatedly if you want to really annoy all your mates..



Soccer



COMMENT

MATT

In the past I've been against Steve awarding such high marks for the various footy games. Apart from getting progressively higher and higher by default alone (which is just plain silly) I still maintain that I've yet to play a footy game as playable as *Sensible Soccer* on the Amiga! (Sad aren't I?) However, *Olympic Soccer* is easily the most playable and fun soccer sim I've seen on the PlayStation, and is probably the only one I would spend any of my own time playing. Great.



ON THE BREAK

Despite the game's arcade-style appearance, US Gold have made provision for the more tactically minded player. From the main menu, preset tactics can be selected (ie breaking loose when the ball is kicked upfield), and pressing the L1 button instigates the set piece to follow — a perfectly positioned player on the receiving end of a free kick, for instance. Such practices are particularly effective following a free kick. The referees in *Olympic Soccer* take no prisoners and virtually every foul is followed by the waving of a red or yellow card. However, if all the players are sent upfield by one of the preset modes as the kick is lined up, vital scoring opportunities are opened up.



HIGH, SWINGING CORNERS DRAW THE KEEPER OFF HIS LINE, AND ALLOW FOR LAST-GASP DIVING HEADERS.

COMMENT

STEVE

I'm starting to become very wary of footy games, as every time a new release is heralded as the best of its kind, another replaces it at the top of the tree. Well, after the playable but flawed efforts of FIFA, Actua and Adidas, it is my dubious honour to pass the short-lived crown of footy supremacy to US Gold's Olympic offering. While *Olympic Soccer* does indeed contain polygon sprites and a modicum of motion capture, the developers have opted for a more arcade-like approach, and then married it in with a wealth of possible moves. As such, while passes, long balls and one-touch shots are there, the game doesn't rely on them — preferring to wean the player in with its easy one-twos and long shots. The passing and back heel buttons and the set-piece moves extend the lasting appeal, but ultimately this is the most accessible of the footy titles so far. One gripe is that the aftertouch is a little pronounced and results in impossibly bent shots, but overall this is the greatest new footy title. And I hope I never have to write those words again.

RATING

GRAPHICS	79
ANIMATION	72
SOUND FX	74
MUSIC	68
LASTABILITY	92
PLAYABILITY	94

OVERALL

93



REVIEW



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE JULY
PRICE £44.95
BY CORE DESIGN
PLAYERS 1-4



As the days grow longer, and the memories of what must have been the longest

winter for years fade

away, the PlayStation is being swamped by a tide of sports-related titles. As Pete Sampras restrings his racquet, Brian Lara is padded up for a future cricket game, and yet another deluge of footy games warm up at the Sony touch line, Derby-based Core Design have opted for a considerably more sedate eighteen holes. Described by Mark Twain 'as a good walk ruined', golf games have been a mainstay of countless computers and consoles since Access revolutionised the genre with *Leaderboard*. Whereas past golf games were viewed from above with minimal club and shot control, *Leaderboard* was the first game to establish the use of a first-person view, along with a full set of clubs and attributing factors such as wind, bunkers and other such hazards.

Having originated as a Scottish Open licence for Sega's ill-fated 32X plug-thru, Core's game has changed beyond all recognition from the *PGA Tour* clone it started life as — while its release date has been delayed thanks to a licensing 'disagreement' with the Scottish Open people. So now, as a direct rival to Gremlin's *Actua Golf* (reviewed on page 88), Core are ready to offer 'Virtual' golf and all the 3D shenanigans it brings with it...



Virtual Golf

FOUR COURSE MEAL

A golf game is only as good as its courses, and Core's game features four eighteen-hole greens to test even the most adept player. Initially, however, the player is only given access to two courses, but on obtaining professional status (remaining under par for four rounds), a

password is given to access the latter two courses.

Similarly, in what appears to be the golfing equivalent of *Ridge Racer*, completion of the four courses proceeds to open a 'mirror round' wherein all the courses are reversed.



THE BOWERY

Located at the centre of the New Forest, The Bowery was established in 1866 by Arthur Pegg, the first chairman of the Shires Golf Course Committee. The original course where The Bowery now stands was designed by one of the greatest golfers of the period, Ernest Randall.



KILMARNEY

In 1927, Irish golfer, Connell O'Hare was recruited by landowner William Percival to create the greatest golf course ever on the west coast of Ireland. The result was Kilmarney, which began as a nine-hole affair, but was extended to the full eighteen in 1942.



PENPERRO

Reminiscent in style to the majority of Scottish courses, this Cornish one dates back to the 1930s. Located on the windy south-western tip of Great Britain, the professional course is particularly testing — with the strong coastal winds making things even harder.



GLENROCHE

Golf has been played in Scotland since 1570, and in comparison to many others, the Glenroche course is a relative youngster. Founded in the 1800s and updated in 1929, it played host to the first Open competition, and ranks as the toughest challenge in the game.



OPTIONS OPEN



When it comes to player options, Core have made *Virtual Golf* as user-friendly as possible. In addition to the basic Skins and normal tournaments, there are team 'Derby' scrambles, a 'Shoot Out' wherein the players are given three randomly-selected holes to sink as quickly as possible, and a driving range for those who aren't following through with a straight arm. If this wasn't enough, provision has been made to zoom in and out of the action, enjoy a commented fly-by of the next course, or view the action from one of six preset cameras.



COMMENT

GARY

My, oh my. Whereas *Actua Golf* is revealed to be an all singing, all dancing simulation, Core's comes across as the idiot cousin. Everything about *Virtual Golf* screams the word average, from the clunky controls to the incredibly simple sprites. The ball doesn't seem to behave as a real one would, and the general feel of the game is one which is some three years out of date. My first experience with a golf game was playing *Leaderboard* eight years ago, and it's horrifying that the 8bit classic is considerably better than this effort.

COMMENT

STEVE

Virtual Golf, in all its 16bit appear-

ance, can be summed up in one word: adequate. Nothing in this game screams 'quality', and even less about it says '32bit.' Quite frankly, what we have here is a no frills, bland golf game that, while acceptable on the Megadrive three years ago, is rather embarrassing today. While *World Cup Golf*, *PGA Tour* and *Actua Golf* all boast 3D courses and realistic animation for their players, *Virtual Golf* limps along with badly animated sprites and jerky flybys as the ball strolls across the screen. As far as play goes, the same applies. It's easy to pick up, there are plenty of options — but, ultimately, it is all so very, very dull. While a full complement of clubs are on offer, the actual swing bar moves so slowly it takes mere minutes to hit the ball perfectly nearly every time, reducing any longevity even further. It cannot be classified a good golf game, but is too polished and moderately playable to be crap. This is average fare, and certainly below par for the PlayStation — especially when you consider its two-year development period.

RATING IN THE WINGS

Virtual Golf can be played by up to four people, each of whom is invited to select their on-screen persona from the 65 characters on offer. If, however, the player is participating in the tournament mode, they are immediately pitted against the CPU golfers, each of whom has been given a ranking out of forty. With B Golder ranked as a mighty 36, and a 32-ranked B Kerber on his tail the competition is fierce. Ordinarily, potting the difference between CPU-controlled players is an impossible task, but as the lower ranks hack their way over par, it soon becomes apparent that Core have worked hard to create a hierarchy among the players.



RATING

GRAPHICS	65
ANIMATION	49
SOUND FX	33
MUSIC	31
LASTABILITY	48
PLAYABILITY	61
OVERALL	57



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVE
CONTINUES: VARIABLE
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE	SEPTEMBER
PRICE	£39.95
BY	ACCLAIM
PLAYERS	1-2



Why is it that they spend millions of dollars preparing a games console that can operate a game as complicated as, say, *Alien Trilogy* or *Resident Evil* and yet softcos still port over the sort of games that start off as simple arcade games and then move into the 16bit technology level, without updating them noticeably to 32bit? I mean, here we are with a game involving those two wacky little Brontos from *Bubble Bobble*, Bub and Bob, and some of their cartoon chums and all you have to do is shoot little coloured balls at other, randomly hung, little coloured balls and knock 'em down in a reverse *Tetris* sort of way. Bub and Bob just sit there and watch, for goodness sake, not an interactive bone in their body. They cheer, laugh, cry or shriek when you make a move, like an animated version of Zippy and George from *Rainbow*. Cute, lovable and rather daft

But is this a game that we really expected to see on the PlayStation? Does it stretch the console? Does it look as if no other console currently on the market could port it over as well as ours? And do Next Generation players want to play a First Generation game?

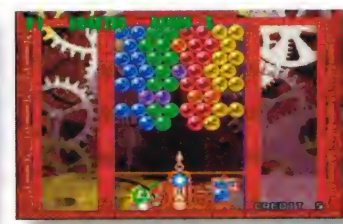
Bust a Move 2

The most basic game, but the best one for solitary players, is the puzzle game where Bub (he with the green scales) pops around an alphabetical screen, selecting which puzzle you're going to play. These vary in difficulty and actually getting through all the letters is very difficult. If that doesn't appeal, you can go for the straightforward game versus the CPU, where your opponents are a selection of animated foes, including a purple whale, a Bjork-like girl in pink and a green cat, whose head rather ingloriously flops off when it loses. Like, gross.



ZAP ALL THE BOBBLES QUICKLY AND GET EXTRA POINTS FOR CLEARING THE SCREEN SO RAPIDLY.

PUZZLIN' EVIDENCE



PLAY WITH YOUR FRIENDS

Bust a Move 2 is at its best in two-player mode, as you battle via a split screen for supremacy. The backgrounds change, the balls come in different formations and, as you progress, you get see-through or black balls. If you play on the Variety level you also get the odd ball with a starburst inside it. Touch this with any other ball and all the balls of that colour vanish. This is great when you've got a top row in one predominant colour. Hit the starburst and watch as all your balls drop down – and onto your opponent's screen, instantly wrecking any carefully laid drops he's been planning. The greatest pleasure of *Bust a Move 2* isn't just about clearing your screen, but also filling up your foe's. Just as they've prepared a lovely cluster of purples to drop, whap 'em with a load of your random balls and you're guaranteed to hear language your mother wouldn't approve of.



BUB AND BOB, NORMALLY SUCH GOOD FRIENDS. BUT AS EACH OF YOU STARTS TO FILL UP THE OTHER'S SCREEN, SEE THAT FRIENDSHIP DIE.



TIME OUT

You can also select to play against yourself, rather than an opponent or the CPU. This is not the same as the puzzle mode (where you have the full screen treatment) but like the two-hander, is a split screen, with nothing going on on the right hand side. Here, you are against previously established Best Times and although the game doesn't stop within a restricted time limit, it tells you whether or not you've beaten firstly your own personal best at clearing the screen and also any scores on a memory card put there by other players.



IT'S A BIT OF A SHAME THAT YOU'RE NOT ENCOURAGED TO PLAY FASTER BY HAVING THE CLOCK STOP THE GAME.



THE RIGHT HAND COUNTER TELLS YOU THE LATEST BEST TIME.

COMMENT

STEVE

Well, if ever a game has proved that simplicity and playability are the two most important ingredients for a good game, *Bust A Move 2* is it. Quite simply, while it never pushes the PlayStation's hardware, it offers a potent blend of puzzles and two-player action to create one of the greatest puzzle games ever. I can honestly rate this as one of the best games I have ever played, and if you can overcome the idea of paying £40 for a simple idea, buy it now.

COMMENT

GARY

Only very rarely does a game plop into the laps of we *PlayStation Plus* chappies that we all sit down and play through lunchtimes, beyond the wee small hours when we should be at home with our families or even as soon as Steve is out of the office, trusting that we're working. Yes, *Bust a Move 2* is such a game, being an addictive, simple, charming and frankly superb game that looks like rubbish but is unmissable. Would that I could give it 100%, but no, the music grates for me and although you come back to it over and over again, it's actual lastability per session isn't great. Apart from that, it has everything a good game (regardless of its complexity) requires: playability, charm, and, most important of all, damn good fun. The characters are cute, especially in the You versus CPU mode, where Bub faces off against some animated foes who react to defeat or victory in amusing ways. I cannot commend *Bust a Move 2* enough - like *Worms* and *Doom* before it, it's a game destined to remain close to our PlayStations for a very long time.

RATING

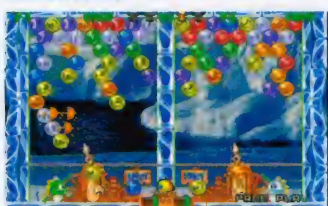
GRAPHICS	89
ANIMATION	89
SOUND FX	90
MUSIC	83
LASTABILITY	91
PLAYABILITY	95

OVERALL

92



IN THE TWO-PLAYER MODE, BOB PLAYS AGAINST BUB. NEITHER OF THEM ARE ADVERSE TO A FEW TEARS WHEN LOSING.



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
CONTINUOUS: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 2

RELEASE JULY
PRICE £44.95
BY GREMLIN
PLAYERS 1-4



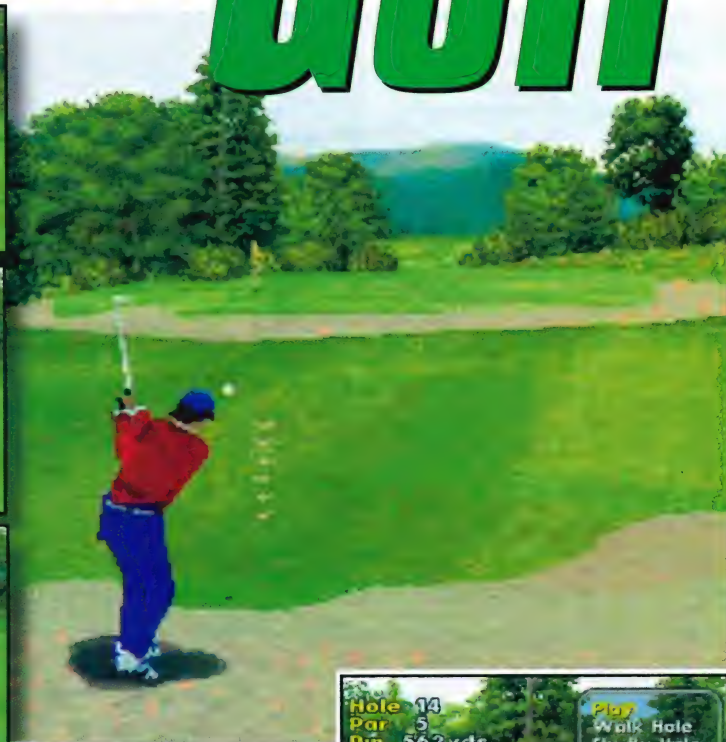
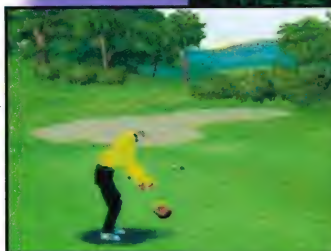
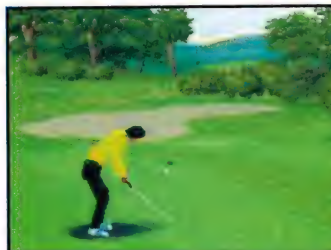
It has been delayed longer than a dozen British Rail services. Held back more times than East

17 fans at a teenybopper convention, and promised more times than a cheque in the post. But now, after a wait of over six months, *Actua Golf* has finally surfaced for the PlayStation. Originally previewed in Issue 1 (September), Gremlin's latest addition to the series follows the precedent set by *Actua Soccer* with a comprehensive array of options, motion-captured sprites, and a full 3D environment which can be viewed from virtually any angle.

Going head to head with Core's *Virtual Golf* (reviewed on page 84), the battle of the bunkers is going to be decided by two important factors: ease of use, and comprehensive options. With the Core game opting for the simplistic feel of an arcade game, *Actua Golf* aims to sit on both stools with a control system which relies on presses of the X button to determine virtually every aspect of a shot, and similarly simple camera views which allow the course, players, and moving shots to be viewed from anywhere in the vicinity. However, while the Core game boasts of eight courses which are duly repeated in 'Mirror Mode', *Actua Golf* is limited to two, eighteen hole courses, although Gremlin are currently busy preparing the first of several data disks — which are loaded into the PlayStation after booting the original CD. Once again, though, it is time to don a pair of gaudy slacks, tuck them into a pair of equally garish plus fours, and pull on an Actua Pringle sweater as the obstacle-laden greens of *Actua Golf* attempt to tempt you away from Core's sparser greens.



Actua Golf



X MARKS THE SPOT

Every aspect of control in *Actua Golf* can be altered or adapted via enough options to warrant a couple of caddies, but the casual golfer can get stuck in straight away with a few successive presses of the X button. The bare bones of a swing is effected by pressing the X button as a swing bar appears and a small marker moves up and down. As seen in the Core game, two points are marked on the bar, and pressing the X button as the marker touches each results in what the CPU defines as the perfect shot. If, however, the second marker isn't hit directly, the shot will veer to the left or right with Peter Aliss on the case to gloat about 'nasty slices.' A large yellow bar also conspicuously extends from the ball to indicate the path the shot should take, and the bar's colour changes to indicate the outcome of the shot, with red indicating it is heading out of bounds, while white means it stands a fair chance of landing in or around the hole. If the beginners guide starts to take the skill out of the proceedings, though, the player can opt to select their own clubs, remove the lines or use a barely visible grid system to plot the paths of putts.



PUTTING CAN BE MADE EASIER BY THE ADDITION OF A GRID OVERLAY ON THE GREEN. USING THIS, ALL THE GREEN'S BUMPS AND PITS ARE ACCENTUATED.



GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS

The game of golf isn't renowned for its athleticism and agility, but Gremlin have still gone to the trouble of motion-capturing their Pringle-wearing entrants. Male and female golfers were filmed

going through the motions of chips, putts and swings, and for an extra dash of realism, the players also bend down to place or pick up balls, celebrate a good shot or show their dejection.



COMMENT

MATT

It's always hard to quantify why you like or loath a golf game as they are, all said and done, nothing more than reaction tests with pretty pictures. *Actua Golf* succeeds thanks to very simple tactics; the controls are simple, the pace fast, the graphics gorgeous, and the camera views numerous and effective. There are only a couple of courses to play on, but with the various modes you're bound to enjoy yourself, especially with chums.

CAMERA-DERIE

As with *Actua Soccer*, Gremlin are using *Actua Golf* to showcase their 3D handling skills. Using the default view, play is seen from behind the player's on screen alter ego, with the cameras then tracking the ball as it soars through the air, before one last camera change to track it landing point. However, the 3D locations allow for all sorts of aesthetical trickery, and players can opt for views which track the ball from the view of the player or the hole, alternatively, Gremlin have created 'Intellicam' which – as the name suggests – intelligently follows the ball's progress via a number of switching views. If CPU players are added to the tournament, a series of television-style vantage points are added, with long chips viewed from angles familiar to those fond of the real thing, and cameras sweeping around long putts for the best possible view. One odd thing,

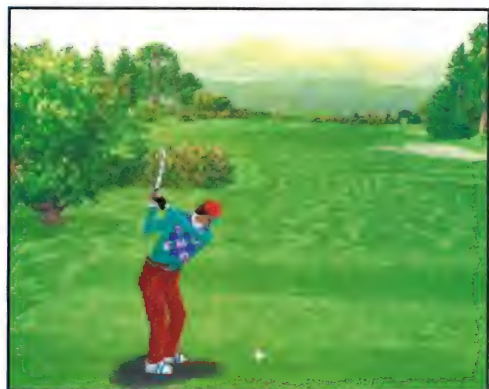
however: whenever a shot just misses the hole or a long shot lands next to the flag, the crowd responds with a suitable 'ooh' or cheer. Yet, when the cameras are doing their thing and swooping in and out for the best view, there's nobody in sight...



A SOUND WITH ALISS

If John Motson is the recognised voice of football, and Murray Walker holds the same title for the world of motor racing, only one man can claim

to be the same for the world of golf – Peter Aliss. During the development of *Actua Golf*, Gremlin got Aliss to provide nearly 1500 samples for inclusion in the game. Their aim was to provide commentary that rarely repeats itself or gets dull, unlike Motty's inane drivel in *FIFA '96*. While the claim is admirable, Aliss does tend to repeat himself quite a lot, and messages like 'oh, I don't think he wanted to do that' and 'that gone way out, way out' make him sound like Harry Enfield's 'You Don't Wanna' character. The overall effect, though, is impressive. With the game played at a more sedate pace than football, the commentary is more accurate (how many times has Barry Davies complimented a shot in *Actua Soccer* when the ball has already gone out for a corner?), and Peter's timing of a close shot is nigh-on perfect – timed just as it lands on the putting green.



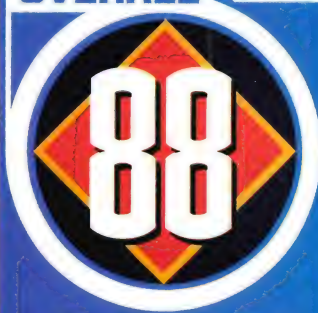
COMMENT

STEVE

Golf games are a strange breed. If they're too detailed they're as dull as ditchwater, but if they're limited in content they have the lasting appeal of a bar of chocolate. Walking on the very thin line between the two, though, is Gremlin's *Actua Golf* which can be as simple or as complex as you want. Every aspect of the game is featured as an option, with any club, any view, and any shot preference selectable from a series of sub-menus. Ordinarily, the majority of these objects would be dismissed as unnecessary frills, but as my shot prowess grew, I started to make things harder for myself and found myself becoming a considerably more astute (albeit *Actua*) golfer. The aesthetic extras, such as the brilliant camera views and motion-capture serve to raise the game above the likes of *PGA Tour '96* and *Virtual Golf*, but it is the realism and instant playability that drew me in. Obviously, a golf game is never going to be honestly described as 'exciting' or 'addictive' but even so, *Actua Golf* is most definitely worth a few rounds.

RATING

GRAPHICS	88
ANIMATION	90
SOUND FX	69
MUSIC	58
LASTABILITY	XX
PLAYABILITY	86
OVERALL	88



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVE
CONTINUUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 3

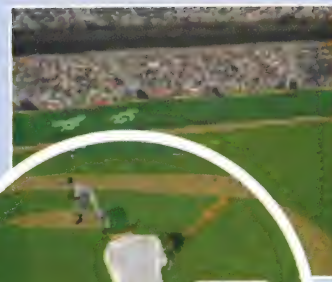
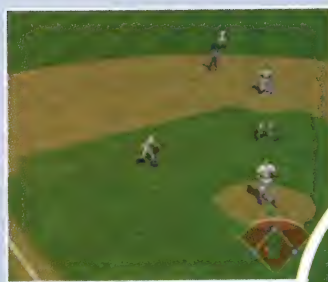
RELEASE JULY
PRICE £44.95
BY ACCLAIM
PLAYERS 1-2



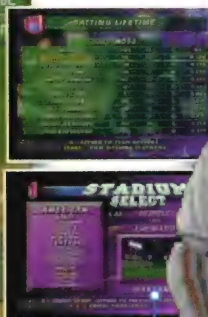
hereas the PlayStation is more than adequately supported in terms of football

games and tennis simulations, softcos have shied away from baseball games, which invariably appear alongside any new hardware. Although others are in preparation, both are hesitant to confirm them for a UK release, feeling that most Brits deride the sport as 'rounders with body armour'. As such, it falls to Acclaim to unveil the first baseball game for the machine as their licence, Frank Thomas, is ported from the Super NES and Megadrive for a Sony outing.

Thomas lends his name to a game fully endorsed by the MHLBA league, so not only does the game contain the likes of the New York Yankees and San Francisco 69ers, but Acclaim can also use the names and statistics of the game's finest. Surprisingly, the PlayStation game's huge batter and pitcher sprites haven't benefited from Acclaim's motion-capture techniques, using instead a blue screen system where the batter goes through the motion in front of a video camera, and each movement is reproduced as a part of the whole animation. With Warner's *Hardball* and Konami's *Pro Baseball* waiting in the wings, can Acclaim steal all bases before the deluge of similar titles arrive...



Frank Thomas *Big Hurt* Baseball



SON OF A PITCH

AS THE PLAYER STEPS UP TO BAT, BATTING STATS ARE DISPLAYED.

Pitching is slightly more complex than slugging the ball, as the ball must pass over the batting plate in order to count as a 'ball.' As the player steps up to the mound, three icons appear indicating the throwing styles available. The square button is used to throw a curve ball which can be steered slightly using the Dpad, allowing for fantastic bending shots which curl over the plate at the last minute. The downside to these, though, is that they are slow-moving and consequently slightly easier to hit. Alternatively, a quick prod of the X button allows for a fast ball, which can also be steered but to a lesser degree. When selected, the speed of the throw is then detailed in a small panel to the side of the batter. *Big Hurt Baseball* supports two game modes, with the usual rules supplemented by a quick game — the main difference being the batter only gets one chance to hit the ball as opposed to three.

FIELD THE WIDTH

The fielders automatically come into play when the ball leaves the diamond. Control intelligently switches to the fielder nearest the moving ball, and switches to the next as soon as it leaves a certain radius. As the ball travels, a red marker indicates its progress allowing the user to position the fielder to catch it. However, as in the real thing, the sprites make the occasional mistake, and the frustration felt when a player lets the ball slip between their legs or drops a sitting catch is every bit as real as when watching a televised game.



Try it before

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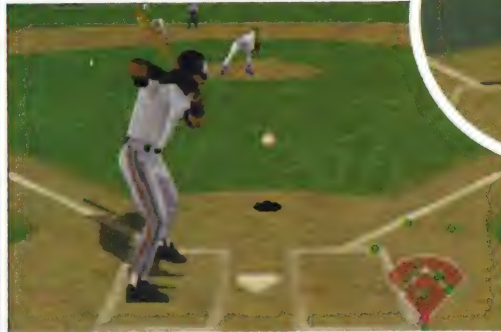


THE CAMERA VIEWS RANGE FROM DISTANT TO EXTREME CLOSE UP.

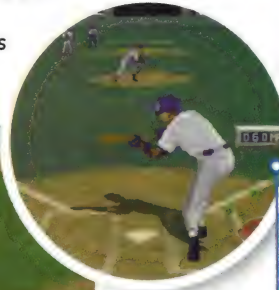


YOU'D BATTER BELIEVE IT

As with all baseball games to date, *Frank Thomas Big Hurt Baseball* uses the familiar view from behind the current batter. The sprite is absolutely massive and dominates roughly two-thirds of the screen height. As the ball is pitched the user has the option of bunting (ie sticking the bat out so the ball drops to the ground), or giving it a smack and a half. The latter is effected using the square button, and as soon as the ball is hit, the view changes to follow the ball and the batter automatically legs it to first base. As the bases begin to get loaded, players can also risk running for home by selecting the player on third base and pressing the X button to send him sprinting towards home — while a secondary press prompts a slide if the ball is being thrown to the fielder guarding it. By far the most satisfying part of batting, however, is hitting a Home Run (into the crowd) when all the bases are loaded. As the players leg it home for runs aplenty the crowd whoop in delight at the freshly hit 'Grand Slam' shot.



BUNTING THE BALL DOWN IS THE EASIEST WAY TO STEAL TO FIRST BASE.



AS THE BALL HEADS TOWARDS THE STANDS, THE VIEW SWITCHES TO FOLLOW IT, WHILE CONTROL IS SWITCHED TO THE FIELDERS. SIMILARLY, IF THE PLAYER IS CONFIDENT THEY CAN HIT THE BALL, PLAYERS WAITING ON BASES CAN BE PROMPTED TO THE NEXT ONE EARLY.

THE LENGTH OF A HOME RUN IS SHOWN AS THE BALL LEAVES THE FIELD AND ENTERS THE CROWD.



THE FIELDERS ARE MODERATELY INTELLIGENT, BUT THEIR THROWING STRENGTH MAY LET THEM DOWN.

COMMENT

STEVE

I love a good baseball game, and what this one lacks in presentation, it makes up for in gameplay. *Acclaim's* game is a frill-less affair — the main sprites are large and cumbersome, and the fielders sluggish. Yet somehow the game gels and before long I found myself becoming quite adept. This comes down to the simplistic nature of the real thing which, while restricting the game's lasting appeal, makes for a game which is very easy to get to grips with. Everything is geared towards ease of use, and I imagine even the most useless armchair athlete will start getting to grips with the precise timing needed for a home run. By no means the pinnacle of baseball games, but a very solid and enjoyable effort.

RATING

GRAPHICS	68
ANIMATION	64
SOUND FX	61
MUSIC	59
LASTABILITY	79
PLAYABILITY	83
OVERALL	81

COMMENT

GARY

Despite absolutely detesting the real thing, there's something very simplistic and enjoyable about *Big Hurt Baseball*. Graphically, it is no great shakes, and the sound is less than impressive (the crowd noises as the players run home are irritating beyond belief), but to pick up and play for an hour or so it is perfect. Baseball games normally suffer from over complex control systems which make even hitting the ball impossible for any one but Joe DeMaggio. Within minutes, however, I was socking Home Runs with the best, and stealing bases left, right and centre. Good fun.

you buy it.

£3.49 for three evenings





REVIEW

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
CONTINUES: MEMORY CARD
SKILL LEVELS: 1

RELEASE JULY

PRICE £44.95

BY BMG

PLAYERS 1

Blazing Dragons



According to the dictionary, a dragon is a "fabulous winged scaly-armoured fire-breathing monster, often a guardian of treasure". They are apparently "fierce, intimidating" and, by genus, "green lizards". They are also paper kites, a slang name for heroin (as in "chasing the...") and a method of causing trouble (as in "sowing the dragon's teeth").

In various movies over the years, they have been portrayed as innocent, bumbling chums (*Pete's Dragon*), vicious menaces (*Dragonslayer*) or a rather loveable animatronic beast with Sean Connery's voice (*Dragonheart*). In *Blazing Dragons*, the lizard heroes fall more towards the Disney-esque bumblers, with even the hero of the piece, Flicker, being a couple of steps short of a staircase. With the ability to make Mr Bean look co-ordinated, Flicker stumbles through the story in his efforts to get his gal, the sardonic, indeed rather miserable Princess Flame (hey, I'm not a dragon, maybe she's the Pamela Anderson of the scaly world).

Clearly intended to compete with Psygnosis' successful *Discworld*, Crystal Dynamics have pulled out all their stops to make this work and, riding on the tail of the television show, it would have to be pretty dreadful to fail.

BLAZING THE TALE

For those of you who simply can't get enough of Flicker, King All-Fire and Princess Flame, there is a twelve-part television series which, at the time of writing, is due to commence its run on Thursday afternoons in most ITV regions during June. With the same animations and voices as their game counterparts, Flicker and co embark on a quest across the land to find the Holy Quail, while fighting off the malicious machinations of Sir George and Mervin, who seek the Queen Griddle's claw in marriage – although she is far more interested in brave Sir Loin-Fire. Exactly how, if at all, this may tie in to the story in the game remains to be seen.

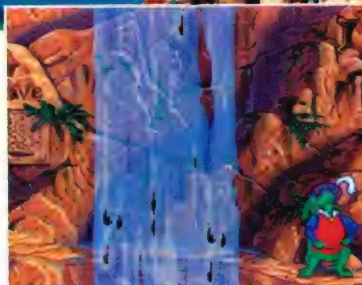
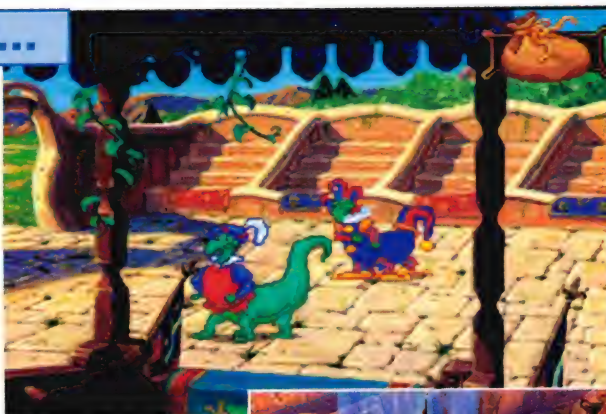


Try it before

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MEET YOUR HOST...

Flicker is a weird young chappie, and no mistake. He's the local inventor and has a quick mind when it comes to picking up odds and ends, putting them together to make something new to help with the washing up, but he's also capable of total disasters. Look at the King's bedroom clock, for instance. That said, everyone seems to have some sort of soft spot for him – collectively the Knights of the Square Table deride him, but individually, they will chat away quite happily. He appears to have a Blackadder/Baldrick relationship with the rather inept jester, Trivet, and gets on well with the Princess Flame. He even copes with King All-Fire's bluster quite well. People such as the librarian, Pureflame, and the lady who runs the Information Booth are always willing to natter away, often giving him unexpected clues, so it's always worth ensuring that Flicker asks everyone he meets all the questions he can. You never know how important something trivial may be later on.



Flicker's very handy bag contains all the things he picks up along the way, plus his trusty pen and journal. You'll see he keeps a written note of everything, which is most useful as the game progresses.

COMMENT

GARY

As someone who found *Discworld* something of a chore to just look at, let alone play, *Blazing Dragons* comes in as welcome relief. It's not particularly easier than *Discworld* and involves just as much cerebral work, but it is a bit more straightforward with an equally dim but far more likeable lead character. Some of the humour is forced, but nevertheless, I found myself smiling (much to the consternation of everyone else in the room) at some of the one liners – the Lady of the Lake is a particular favourite of mine. *Blazing Dragons* is unlikely to keep you occupied quite as long as *Discworld* did, but it has enough breadth and depth to require more than just a couple of evenings to get the hang of it. While not normally "my thang", I really rather enjoyed this.

SAVING THE QUEST TILL LAST

The first thing Flicker has to do is follow the Knights of the Square Table and try and get them out of trouble. Sir Loungelot is, unfortunately, lost in the woods and will have to help himself, but the others...

REFLECTED LOVE

The narcissistic Sir Blaze is found talking to his asinine alter ego in a pond. Blaze is too much in love with himself to be useful but can the frog sitting opposite help?



TORTURED CRIES

Useless Sir Burnevere is the prisoner of Doctor Fraud and his insane charges. But can the foli-cally challenged Rapunzel offer any escape useful suggestions?



FLAMING ROW

The myopic Sir Gasflame is busy having a heated discussion with King All-Fire outside the castle. Flicker must distract them if he is to get any sense out of either one.



COMMENT

STEVE

Discworld never appealed to me as I found the humour laboured, and the actual game rather finicky. With *Blazing Dragons* cast from the same mould, my hopes were not high, yet I found myself enjoying this Terry Jones adventure more than Mr Pratchett's. Basically, it comes down to the control interface which is one of the best of its kind, and allows even the novice adventurer to get to grips with the game. That said, the humour is still a stumbling block. No number of silly voices and crap gags are going to make me smile after the tenth hearing, but basically this is a sound enough adventure.

RATING

GRAPHICS	83
ANIMATION	90
SOUND FX	85
MUSIC	82
LASTABILITY	86
PLAYABILITY	89

OVERALL

87

you buy it.

£3.49 for three evenings

BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVE
CONTINUES: MEMORY CARD
SKILL LEVELS: 1

RELEASE JULY

PRICE £44.95

BY SONY

PLAYERS 1



ne of the most frequently asked questions I receive as Keeper of the Plus Points

Postbag is when the PlayStation is going to receive a *Sim City*-style build-er-own town/city/country/world/interstellar cartography display. Okay, so we already have *Theme Park* and, coming one day, is *Theme Hospital*, but, by golly, where is the ability to run trains through hillsides and place stations at bizarre out-of-the-way locations and bankrupt yourself?

Well, while we're waiting for *Transport Tycoon* to plop into our machines, here comes *A IV Global Evolution* to show you the best way of taking a lush, green area of land and turn it into a sprawling metropolis of pollution. Yeah. You too can get the trees felled, knock down listed buildings and place vast bridges across rivers, hopefully poisoning a few dozens spawning salmon into the bargain. And to cap it all, you have to play the stocks and shares market, making sure you can afford all this work, keep your workers happy, ensure that passengers can get to the stations you build, trains can unload their cargo etc.

It's a capitalist's dream come true, and unlikely to appeal the obsessively PC folk around. But for those of us sweet, kind environmentally sound, socially aware types, well, it's an excuse to be really bad! Yeah!



A IV Evolution Global

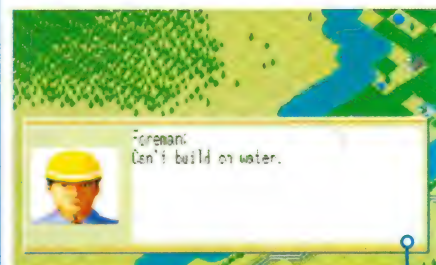


O! TYCOON - NO!

Help in any new venture is always appreciated, even when it interferes with your plans. Nothing can help you from an embarrassing mistake better than your friendly workers' foreman, whom I have nicknamed George. George pops up at inopportune moments to tell you (aka stating the bleedin' obvious) that no, you cannot place a bridge eighteen feet in the air. No, you can't drive a tunnel through a hill that has a sheer drop on the other side., No, you can't place a station on the apex of a hillock because there's nothing to build foundations on. George is actually a great deal more intelligent than the player is. Which, in my case, is just as well.

IT'S A RICH MAN'S WORLD

By far the most frightening aspect of any Godsim is keeping careful, and tight, control on the purse strings. *A IV Global Evolution* is no different. It's all very well ramming a tunnel through a hillside, putting train tracks either side, building a railway bridge across the nearby ravine and dotting stations around it, but if you're not careful, you're out of cash and that's it. All over. Bankruptcy time. Clive Sinclair, eat yer heart out. Of course, this is easily avoided by keeping one eye carefully on the bank balance, sorting out what you are doing with your cash, and being terribly clever. As someone whose knowledge of mathematics barely scrapes above two plus two equals four (and that's on a good day), it's good to see that you very quickly pick up the whys and wherefores of all this money stuff, enabling you to run your new world with a pleasant amount of ease and intelligence.



GEORGE IS TERRIBLY GOOD AT ALERTING YOU TO YOUR OWN STUPIDITY.



Try it before

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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF YOUR CITY

PARDON ME BOY, IS THAT THE EVOLUTION CHOO-CHOO?

There's an old adage that all boys want to grow up to be a train driver. I've yet to actually meet anyone who ever held such an ambition (let alone achieved it) but there must be some, somewhere. Nevertheless, for those of us who wonder what exactly the attraction is, *A IV Global Evolution* has the answer. Not only can you effectively drive the trains, you lay the track, set the points, alter the routes and decide what will operate public transport stock, what will be cargo stock and what, in true RailTrack style, which sit in a siding for twenty years and get rusty. Of course, should you neglect your stock, its upkeep and its smooth running, you could find yourself in deep water financially as the game acts like your own electronic accountant, ensuring that you don't make too many major errors. God help you, by the way, if you cause a major accident in a built up area. The insurance claims would probably be massive!



THE STATION MASTER BLOWS THE WHISTLE ON YOUR PLANS!



EVEN THE BUS DRIVER WILL COMPLAIN IF YOU PUT STOPS IN DAFT PLACES

COMMENT

STEVE

My name is Steve Merrett and I am a convert to strategy games. When the PlayStation came out I thought the likes of *X-Com* and *A IV Global Evolution* would be doomed. After all, if your machine can play a perfect version of *Doom*, why bother building cities? Yet, here I am, days later, wondering how I can sort out my rail problems, and whether my latest track is going to be viable. This isn't as detailed as *Sim City 2000*, yet it still manages to draw the player into its hidden intricacies. If you've had enough of first-person blasters and BFGs, this is the most rewarding title I can think of.



MOVING YOUR SUPPLIES AROUND AT NIGHT IS NOT ALWAYS THE CHEAPEST THING TO DO.

COMMENT

GARY

Before now I've only watched people playing *Sim City 2000* on a PC and thought what dreadfully sad people they are. Where's the excitement in building an office block, or arranging a bus route to take kids to school. Bring in a flying saucer to blast the office block to rubble – well, that's fun! But now I've played *A IV Global Evolution* and, I think, I may be hooked. Half the fun is starting out by trying to put train lines through rivers and build depots in inappropriate places, but once you begin taking it seriously, this is exceptionally good fun. What this game falls down in is its basic similarity to all the others but it's still pretty darn good stuff and you won't have finished it in a week – unlike a lot of shoot 'em ups.

RATING

GRAPHICS	72
ANIMATION	73
SOUND FX	61
MUSIC	63
LASTABILITY	89
PLAYABILITY	84
OVERALL	86



you buy it.

£3.49 for three evenings

BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO

GEX

99 Lives

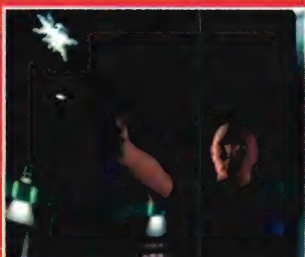
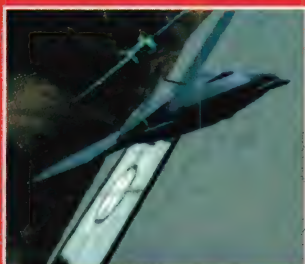
In the Rock It! stage (in New Toonland) jump onto the rocket that appears right after the third camera. There's an arrow made of flies that points down to a hole where a yellow, er... thing can be hit with your tail to make it purple. You'll now find an opening to the right containing four extra lives and a remote control. Collect these items and then jump into the nearby spikes and die. You'll then start back at the last camera, from where you can repeat the entire sequence - each time trading one life for four! Excellent.



CYBERIA

Cheat Codes and Credits

At the beginning of the game, enter your name as NEM-ROSIM. You'll now be able to select difficulty Level 1 for both Arcade and Puzzle modes, "load" any game save point (as all the passwords are there for you) and add blood. This last one doesn't have a huge effect, but try it out at the Slice-O-Matic death scene. Cool. As for getting the Sony developers' credits (but why I ask you?) enter these two different passwords at the terminal password screen:
TNRUB SDC NOILLIB A
REEB OROPPAS KNIRD



ALIEN TRILOGY

Access Cheat Menu

Apologies for the misprint last month. In case you hadn't guessed, the level skip codes should have been GOLVL followed by the number you want (no space). An even better code, however, is to enter the passcode:
1G0TP1NK8C1DB00TS0N.
You'll now be able to manipulate the full cheat menu until you drop.

Cheat Codes

Tap in these sequences during the game:

Invincibility:

L, Fire, L, Fire, L, L, Fire, R, Fire, R, Fire, Fire.

All Weapons & Items:

L, R, L, L, R, L, R, R, U, D, U, U, D, U, D, D.



SW2 - 4: ---
 SW2 - 5: NUMBER OF MY CARS AT START
 SW2 - 6: BONUS MY CARS
 SW2 - 7: BONUS MY CARS
 SW2 - 8: ---

GALAGA

SW2 - 1: TEST SWITCH
 SW2 - 2: VIDEO MODE (ARCADE SIDEWAYS/NORMAL)
 SW2 - 3: VIDEO MODE (PANDRAMA/NORMAL)
 SW2 - 4: BONUS FIGHTERS
 SW2 - 5: BONUS FIGHTERS
 SW2 - 6: BONUS FIGHTERS
 SW2 - 7: NUMBER OF FIGHTERS AT START
 SW2 - 8: NUMBER OF FIGHTERS AT START

SW3 - 1: ---
 SW3 - 2: ---
 SW3 - 3: ---
 SW3 - 4: DEMO SOUND
 SW3 - 5: PAUSE
 SW3 - 6: ---
 SW3 - 7: ---
 SW3 - 8: ---

BOSCONIAN

SW2 - 1: TEST SWITCH
 SW2 - 2: ---
 SW2 - 3: ---
 SW2 - 4: BONUS SPACE PATROLLERS
 SW2 - 5: BONUS SPACE PATROLLERS
 SW2 - 6: BONUS SPACE PATROLLERS
 SW2 - 7: NUMBER OF SPACE PATROLLERS (SHIPS) AT START
 SW2 - 8: NUMBER OF SPACE PATROLLERS (SHIPS) AT START

SW3 - 1: ---
 SW3 - 2: ---
 SW3 - 3: CONTINUE
 SW3 - 4: DEMO SOUND
 SW3 - 5: PAUSE
 SW3 - 6: ---
 SW3 - 7: ---
 SW3 - 8: ---

TOY POP

SW2 - 1: TEST SWITCH
 SW2 - 2: ---
 SW2 - 3: ---
 SW2 - 4: ---
 SW2 - 5: ---
 SW2 - 6: ---
 SW2 - 7: NUMBER OF PINO/ACHA's (MEN) AT START
 SW2 - 8: NUMBER OF PINO/ACHA's (MEN) AT START
 SW3 - 1: BONUS PINO/ACHA's
 SW3 - 2: ---
 SW3 - 3: ---
 SW3 - 4: CONTINUE
 SW3 - 5: DEMO SOUND
 SW3 - 6: ---
 SW3 - 7: LEVEL SELECT
 SW3 - 8: ---



FIRESTORM: THUNDERHAWK 2

Level Passwords

South America

Level 1 - ONHV0V6VEBDU55Q
 Level 2 - 2NH70V9VEFDQ592
 Level 3 - 7RH30V7AEFD64BI
 Level 4 - 8NH30V8EEJD24PI

Gulf 2 - Oil Dispute

Level 1 - VNHR0V0E6JDE53I
 Level 2 - 0RHV0U066NDA53A
 Level 3 - IFHD0U0U6RDM5P2
 Level 4 - NJHP0UKE6VDI5BI

Stealth

Level 1 - 07HP0U0QAUDE45A
 Level 2 - U7HL0UNIAUDA5RA
 Level 3 - AFHP0UKUA2DM4HI

Central America

Level 1 - FJHL0UGH2CE4KI
 Level 2 - G7HH0U72I2CA5R2
 Level 3 - 2BHP0URQI6CM58A

South China Sea

Level 1 - KRG50URQ26GE4J2
 Level 2 - 0RGL0UTI3AGA5UI
 Level 3 - FRG9S1CM3EGM52I

Panama

Level 1 - 93G5SD9UNGGE4OA
 Level 2 - VVG5SHUENGGA45Q
 Level 3 - JNGH4CPUNKGM5TI

Eastern Europe

Level 1 - L3GG4406VOEE5R1
 Level 2 - F7GK552QV0EA41A
 Level 3 - 27GK50UMV4EM58Q

Gulf 1 - Canyon

Level 1 - 7FGK48T6R8ME4NI
 Level 2 - 8JGK48VUR8MA5JQ

End

T7GK28U25CMM4OI

THEME PARK

More Money

Pretty simple this one, just enter as your nickname as BOVINE and then press ●, ■ and X during the game. This can be done more than once.



BLACK HOLE



Primal Rage

CHARACTER MOVES

Move Abbreviations

- T** = Towards
D = Down
A = Away
U = Up

HQ = High Quick
HF = High Fierce
LQ = Low Quick
LF = Low Fierce

Full Toward = Full circle clockwise
 (when facing right)
 Full Away = Full circle anti-clockwise
 (when facing right)

General Moves

Quick Bite: HQ
 Chomp: HF
 Big Chomp: HQ & HF
 Quick Tail: LQ
 Tail: LF
 Big Tail: LQ & LF
 Slide: D & LQ & LF (Talon, Chaos and Blizzard only)
 Short Slide: D & LF (Talon only)
 Standard Jump: U or UA or UT
 Long Jump: Tap D, U or UA or UT
 Hop Jump: Tap T or A, tap D, U or UA or UT

Primal Rage, eh? For all of its faults, it remains a welcome addition to the ever-bulging bag that is the PlayStation beat 'em up genre collection. It's not the best we've seen, but it's not the worst. Come with us now as we unravel the many mysteries...

Brain Drain

Each time you take a hit, your brain gauge goes down. If it reaches zero, you'll become stunned for a period of time, during which your opponent can (and will) kick the crap out of you. Apart from not being hit, the only thing you can actually do to regenerate your brain power is to keep away from your opponent and then move the pad left and right rapidly.

More Cheese Vicar?

You'll notice that if you fight in a way the machine considers 'cheesy', The 'No Cheese' sign lights up, and your attack inflicts no damage on the recipient. Here are the conditions under which such fromage flags appear:

- Using the same move twice in a combination.
- Attempting a throw or unblockable attack immediately after an opponent has blocked a previous attack.
- Using the same basic move more than five times in a sequence.
- Performing two Low Quick and Low Fierce attacks in a combination.
- Using Blizzard's Freeze Breath and Ice Geyser in a combination.
- Performing Vertigo's Come Slither followed by a Voodoo Spell or Vertigo, teleporting in, doing it again and then teleporting out.

Let's Play Volleyball!

Play a two-payer game using Sauron's stage for the backdrop. Now perform a combination move on the other player and watch as worshippers run out and start bowing. Hit the worshipper nearest you at the other player who must then knock him back to you before he hits the ground. Keep hitting the worshipper backwards and forwards, and after ten returns a judge on a high chair will appear along with a net. You can now play a nice little volleyball game using a helpless worshipper. The first to three points wins.

Let's Go Bowling

Both players should select Armadon (any stage will do). Both players must now keep performing the Spinning Death move, and after three collisions you'll go bowling. Worshippers act as pins, and your Spinning Death move acts as the ball. There are two frames to play.

It's Raining Cows and Bricks!

For this to work, you and your opponent must be in match mode. You also need to play as Chaos and fight on the ruins stage. Get to the end of the third round with both parties tied, and allow both combatants to be knocked down at time out. You'll enter a Sudden Death round, and you need to perform a F 'o' Fury so that the green cloud is in the air as the Sudden Death begins. Cows will now rain down instead of meteors. If you don't use the F 'o' Fury during the ruins stage, the sky will rain bricks instead. Also, if Sudden Death occurs on Blizzard's stage, the sky will rain ice balls.

Special Effects

- Perform a combination containing at least four hits that causes a minimum of 35% damage, and you'll be treated to a spectacular thunder and lightning display.
- Naked worshippers will run across the screen if Vertigo manages a combination with five or more hits ending in the Come Slither move. The same happens if Armadon manages the same but ending with the Hornication Uppercut.

Chaos

Special moves

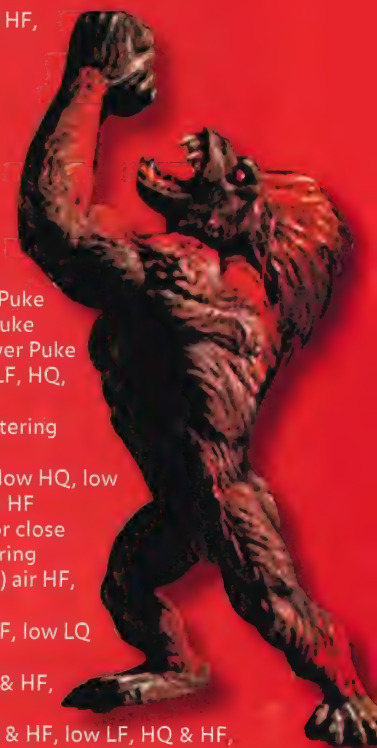
Power Puke (Slow): Hold HF & LQ while pressing U-T (rolled)
Power Puke (Fast): Hold HQ & LF while pressing U-T (rolled)
Fart of Fury: Hold HF & LQ while pressing T-U-A (rolled)
Grab 'n' Throw: Hold HF & LF while pressing T, A (must be close)
Ground Shaker: Hold HF & LQ while pressing A, AU, AD
Battering Ram: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing T, T
Eat Human: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing T-D-A (rolled)

Fatalities

Cannonball: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing AD, UT-DT-AD (rolled)
Golden Shower: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing D, D and then Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing A, T, A, T
Churl: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while tapping T, T, T, A, A, A

Combos

Non-Dairy: HF, HQ & HF, Grab-'n'-Throw
Super Non-Dairy: air LF, air LQ & LF, close HF, Grab-'n'-Throw
Tofu: air LF, air LQ & LF, HF, HQ & HF, Grab-'n'-Throw
Sewer Spewer: HF, HQ & HF, Fast Power Puke
Super Sewer Spewer: air LF, air LQ & LF, HQ, Fast Power Puke
Wake Up And Smell The Chaos: air LF, air LQ & LF, LF, HQ, Fast Power Puke
Chunky Cream Corn: far Slow Power Puke, Flying Butt Slam, low LQ, HQ, Fast Power Puke
Hurler: low LF, low LQ & LF, Slow Power Puke
Hyper Hurler: HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Slow Power Puke
Tastes Better Coming Up: air LF, air LQ & LF, HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Slow Power Puke
Wacky: low HQ, low HQ, low LQ & LF, Battering Ram
Super Wacky: air LF, air LQ & LF, low HQ, low HQ, low LQ & LF, Battering Ram, low HF, low HQ & HF
Cadelina Special: air LF, air LQ & LF, HQ (or close HF), HF, HQ & HF, HQ, low LQ & LF, Battering Ram, low HQ, low HQ, (long jump towards) air HF, air HQ & HF
Spinner: HQ & HF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, low LQ & LF
Super Spinner: air LF, air LQ & LF, HF, HQ & HF, low LF, HQ & HF
Devastator: air LF, air LQ & LF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, low LQ & LF, low LF



Vertigo

Special Moves

Air Teleport: Hold HF & LF while pressing D, U
Ground Teleport: Hold HF & LF while pressing D, D
Come Slither: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing A, A
Venom Spit (Slow): Hold HQ & LQ while pressing T, T
Venom Spit (Fast): Hold HF & LF while pressing T, T
Scorpion Sting: Hold HF & LQ while tapping T, T
Hypnosis: Hold HF & LQ while pressing A, A (opponent must be close)
Eat Human: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing D-T-U (rolled)

Fatalities

Petrify: Hold HF & LF while tapping A, A, A and then Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while tapping T, T
Shrink and Eat: Hold HF & LF while tapping A, A, A and then Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while tapping D, U
La Vache Qui Rit: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while tapping A, A, A, D, T

Combos

Spitter: low HQ, low HQ, low HQ & HF, Come Slither, Slow Venom Spit
Here's Lookin' At You, Kid: low HQ, low HQ, low HF, low HQ & HF, Come Slither, (hop jump towards) air LF, air LQ & LF, HQ, Slow Venom Spit
Blinder: low HQ, low HQ, low HQ & HF, Come Slither, HF, HQ & HF, Fast Venom Spit
Super Blinder: air LF, air LQ & LF, Voodoo Spell, HQ, HQ, HQ & HF, Fast Venom Spit
You'll Put Your Eye Out: low HQ, low HQ, low HF, low HQ & HF, Come Slither, (hop jump towards) air LF, air LQ & LF, HQ, HQ, HQ & HF, Fast Venom Spit
Streaker: LQ & LF, Come Slither, (walk towards) low HQ, low HQ, low HF, low LQ & LF, Scorpion Sting
Super Streaker: air LF, air LQ & LF, low HQ, low HQ, low HF, low HQ & HF, Come Slither, (walk towards) low HQ, low HQ, low HF, low HQ & HF, Scorpion Sting
Peoples Punisher: air LF, air LQ & LF, low HQ, HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Come Slither, (hop jump towards) air LF, air LQ & LF, low HQ, HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Scorpion Sting



Armadon

Special moves

Bed-o'-Nails: Hold HF & LQ while pressing D, U
Hornication Uppercut: Hold HQ & HF & LQ while pressing DT-T-UT (rolled)
Mega Charge: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing A-D-T (rolled)
Spinning Death: Hold HQ & LF while pressing A, T-D (rolled)
Flying Spikes: Hold HF & LF while pressing A-U (rolled)
Iron Maiden: Hold HF & LQ while pressing A-U-T (rolled)
Gut Gouger: Hold HQ & HF & LQ while pressing T, A (must be close)
Eat Human: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing U-T (rolled)

Fatalities

Gut Fling: Hold HQ & HF & LQ while pressing D, D, D, D, U
Meditation: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing T, D, A, T, T
Impaler: Hold HQ & HF & LQ while pressing D, A, U, D

Combos

Pincushion: low LF, low LQ & LF, Mega Charge, Bed-o'-Nails
Dive Bomber: air HF, air HQ & HF, HF, HQ & HF, Hornication Uppercut
Super Dive Bomber: air HF, air HQ & HF, low HQ, low HF, low HQ & HF, Hornication Uppercut
Death Dart: air HF, air HQ & HF, HF, HQ & HF, Flying Spikes
Super Death Dart: low HQ, low HQ, low LQ & LF, Mega Charge, HF, Flying Spikes
Bullseye: air HF, air HQ & HF, low HQ, low HQ, low LQ & LF, Mega Charge, HF, Flying Spikes
Gut Buster: air HF, air HQ & HF, HF, HQ & HF, Gut Gouger
Super Gut Buster: air HF, air HQ & HF, HF, HF, HQ & HF, Gut Gouger
Steamroller: HF, LQ & LF, Mega Charge, LF, Spinning Death
Freight Train: low HQ, low HQ, low LQ & LF, Mega Charge, HF, Hornication Uppercut
Train Wreck: air LF, air LQ & LF, low HQ, low HQ, low LQ & LF, Mega Charge, HF, Hornication Uppercut



TIPS

BLACK KNIGHT



Diablo

Special Moves

Fireball (Slow): Hold HK & LF while pressing D-T (rolled)
Fireball (Fast): Hold HQ & LQ while pressing D-T (rolled)
Torch: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing U-T (rolled)
Inferno Flash: Hold HF & LQ & LF while pressing U
Hot Foot: Hold HF & LF while pressing UA, DT
Mega Lunge: Hold HQ & LF while pressing D-T (rolled)
The Pulverizer: Hold HQ & LF while pressing U-T-D (rolled)
Eat Human: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing D, U, D

Fatalities

Incinerator: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing UA-D-DT (rolled)
Fireball: Hold HF & LQ & LF while pressing T, T, T
Infernal: Hold HQ & LQ & LF while pressing U, D, U, D, D

Combos

Disco Inferno: corner Torch, HQ & HF, Inferno Flash, HF, HQ & HF, Hot Foot
Pyromaniac: corner Torch, low LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Inferno Flash, low HQ, low HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Hot Foot
Flaming Face: LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Slow Fireball
Super Flaming Face: air LF, air LQ & LF, HF, HQ & HF, Slow Fireball
Warm It Up: air LF, air LQ & LF, LQ, LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Slow Fireball
Burning Eyeball: LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Fast Fireball
Melting Eyeball: low LQ, low LQ, HF, low LQ & LF, Fast Fireball
Flaming Ball Of Doom: air LF, air LQ & LF, LQ, LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Fast Fireball
Headache: HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Mega Lunge
Migraine: air LF, air LQ & LF, low LQ, low LQ, HF, low LQ & LF, Mega Lunge
Skull Splitter: corner air LF, air LQ & LF, low LQ, low LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Mega Lunge, HF, HF
Original Recipe: Torch, HF, HQ & HF, Hot Foot
Extra Crispy: Torch, low LQ, low LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Hot Foot
You Want Fries With That?: corner Torch, HQ, HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Hot Foot, low HQ, HF, HQ & HF
Spontaneous Combustion: corner air LF, air LQ & LF, low HQ, HQ & HF, Inferno Flash, low HQ, HQ & HF, Slow Fireball



Blizzard

Special Moves

Mega Punch (Short): Hold HQ & LQ while pressing A, T
Mega Punch (Long): Hold HF & LF while pressing A, T
Mega Punch (Quick): Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing A, T
Mega Punch (Fake): Hold HQ & LQ while pressing D, U
Punching Bag: Hold HQ & LF while pressing T-D-A-U
Air Throw: tap HF & LQ when in air above opponent
Throw: Hold HF & LQ while pressing A-U-T (rolled)
Freeze Breath: Hold HQ & HF & LF while pressing A, T
Ice Geyser: Hold HQ & HF & LF while pressing D, U
Eat Human: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing A-U-T-D (rolled)

Fatalities

Brain Bash: Hold HQ & HF & LF while pressing D, D-A-U-T (rolled)
To-Da-Moon: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing D, D, D, D, U
Redemption: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing D, T, U, D, U

Combos

Jack Hammer: air LF, air LQ & LF, LF, LQ & LF
Super Jack Hammer: Freeze Breath, air LF, air LQ & LF, LF, LQ & LF, Quick Mega Punch
I've Fallen And I Can't Get Up: air LF, air LQ & LF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, HQ & HF, Ice Geyser, (jump towards) air LF, air LQ & LF, LF, LQ & LF
Come Fly With Me: low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, low LQ & LF, Ice Geyser, (jump towards) Air Throw
It's The Only Way To Fly: low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, low LQ & LF, Ice Geyser, (jump towards) air LQ & LF, Air Throw
Boom Shakalaka: low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, low LQ & LF, Ice Geyser, air LQ & LF, Air Throw
Bruiser: Ice Geyser, HQ & HF, low LF, low LQ & LF
Bone Breaker: Ice Geyser, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, low LQ & LF
Does It Hurt?: low LF, HQ & HF, Ice Geyser, (jump towards) air LF, air LQ & LF, HQ, HF, HQ & HF, low LF, low LQ & LF
Lightning Jab: Freeze Breath, Punching Bag, (jump towards) air HF, HQ & HF
Super Lightning Jab: air LF, air LQ & LF, low LF, HQ & HF, Ice Geyser, Punching Bag, (walk towards) HQ & HF, Long Mega Punch
Unleash The Power Of Rage: air LF, air LQ & LF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, Ice Geyser, air LF, air LQ & LF, HF, HQ & HF, 39-hit Punching Bag, (jump towards) air LQ & LF
Midnight Slam: Freeze Breath, 5-hit Punching Bag, (jump towards) Air Throw
Super Midnight Slam: 25-hit Punching Bag, (jump towards) Air Throw
Be Kind To Animals: air LF, air LQ & LF, HF, HQ & HF, low LF, Ice Geyser, air LF, air LQ & LF, HQ, HQ & HF, 39-hit Punching Bag, (jump towards) Air Throw
Crushed Ice: air LQ & LF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, HQ & HF, Ice Geyser, (jump towards) air LQ & LF, low LQ & LF
Crystal Crasher: air LF, air LQ & LF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, HQ & HF, low LF, low LQ & LF, Ice Geyser, (jump towards) air HQ & HF, Air Throw



Talon

Special Moves

Run Forwards: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing T
Run Backwards: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing A
Frantic Fury: Hold HQ & LF while pressing D-T
The Slasher: Hold HQ & LQ & LF while pressing D-T (rolled)
Brain Basher: Hold HF & LQ while pressing A-U-T (rolled)
The Face Ripper: Hold HF & LF while pressing D-T (must be close)
Pounce and Flip: Hold HF & LQ while pressing T-D-DT (rolled)
Jugular Bite: Hold HF & LF while pressing A, T (opponent must be close and reacting to a hit)
Eat Human: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing T-D (rolled)

Fatalities

Heart Wrenching: Hold HQ & LQ & LF while pressing T-D-A-U (rolled)
Shredder: Hold HQ & LF while pressing T-D-A-U (rolled)
Stampede: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing T, A, U, D

Combos

Skull Slicer: corner Brain Basher, (Hold towards) air HQ & HF, low HQ, low HQ
Super Skull Slicer: corner Brain Basher, (Hold towards) air HQ & HF, low HQ, low HQ, low LQ & LF
Full Frontal Lobotomy: air LF, low HQ, Slasher, low HQ, low HQ, low LF, low LQ & LF, Frantic Fury
Throat Popper: HQ, low LF, HQ & HF, Jugular Bite
Super Throat Popper: air LF, air HQ & HF, HQ, low LF, HQ & HF, Jugular Bite
Go For The Jugular: low HQ, low HQ, Slasher, low HQ, low LF, HQ & HF, Jugular Bite
Slider: low LF, LQ & LF, Slasher, low HQ, low HQ, low LF
Super Slider: low HQ, low HQ, low LF, LQ & LF, Slasher, low HQ, low HQ, low LF
Slide, Slide, Slippidy Slide: corner air LF, air HQ & HF, low HQ, low HQ, low HF, LQ & LF, Slasher, low HQ, low HQ, low LF, LQ & LF, low HQ, low LF
Elegant: air HQ & HF, HF, HQ & HF, Pounce and Flip
Glorious: low HQ, low HQ, Slasher, low HQ, low LF, Pounce and Flip
Warp Factor Nine: deep air LF, air HQ & HF, HQ, low LF, HQ & HF, Slasher, HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Pounce and Flip



Sauron

Special Moves

Primal Scream: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing D, U
Stun Roar: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing A, T
Earthquake Stomp: Hold HQ & HF & LF while pressing U, D
Cranium Crusher: Hold HQ & LF while pressing D, U
Leaping Bone Bash: Hold HF & LQ while pressing D, U, D
Neck Throw: Hold HF & LF while pressing T, A (must be close)
Air Throw: tap HF & LF when in air above opponent
Eat Human: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing D, D, U

Fatalities

Flesh Eating: Hold HQ & LQ while pressing D, D and then Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing U, U
Carnage: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while pressing A, T, A, T, A
Grape Crusher: Hold HQ & HF & LQ & LF while tapping U, D, U, D, D

Combos

Stomper: air LF, air HQ & HF, air Earthquake Stomp, HQ & HF
Slam: air LQ & LF, air Earthquake Stomp, (jump again) air LQ, Air Throw
Earthquake Shaker: air HQ & HF, (jump again) air LF, air Earthquake Stomp, (jump again) air LQ, Air Throw
Have A Nice Day: air LF, air LQ & LF, (jump again) air LF, air HQ & HF, air Earthquake Stomp, (jump again) air LQ, Air Throw
Up, Up, And Away: air LQ & LF, air Earthquake Stomp, close HQ & HF, Cranium Crusher
Bump, Set, Crush: air LF, air LQ & LF, air Earthquake Stomp, close HQ & HF, Cranium Crusher
It's A Beautiful Day In The Neighbourhood: air LF, air HQ & HF, (jump again) air LF, air Earthquake Stomp, HQ, Cranium Crusher
Crunchy: HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Neck Throw
Extra Crunchy: air LQ & LF, LQ, LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Neck Throw
Take A Bite Outta Crime: air LF, air LQ & LF, LQ, LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Neck Throw
Ear Splitter: LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Primal Scream
Super Ear Splitter: air LF, air LQ & LF, low LQ, HF, low LQ & LF, Primal Scream
The Secret Of The Cow: air LF, air LQ & LF, (hop jump) air LF, air HQ & HF, HQ, HF, HQ & HF, Primal Scream
Roaring Terror: LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Stun Roar
Super Roaring Terror: air LF, air LQ & LF, LQ, LQ, HF, HQ & HF, Stun Roar
Rocker Launcher: low HQ, low HQ, low LQ & LF, Cranium Crusher
Super Rocket Launcher: air LF, air LQ & LF, LQ, LQ, HF, low LQ & LF, Cranium Crusher



BLACK OUT



RISE 2 RESURRECTION

Aclaim and Mirage's sequel to one of the worst games of all time is worth a look if only for some of the stranger attacks. Thus, if you are the proud (well, proud-ish) owner of a copy, this list of special moves is going to prove pretty indispensable.

SALVO

Knife Throw: F, DF, D & Punch
Flame Thrower: D, DF, F & Punch
Machete Cartwheel: F & Fierce Punch (Px3)
Slide: B, DB, D & Kick
Triple Flame: B, DB, D, DF, F & Kick or Punch (Super)

CHROMAX

Low Fireball: D, DF, F & Punch
Head Throw: B, B, B & Punch or hold Back, Punch, Punch, Punch
Dash Attack: F, F, F & Kick or hold Forward, Kick, Kick, Kick
Slide: B, DB, D & Kick
Death Drop: D, D, D & Kick or hold Down, Kick, Kick, Kick (Super)

LOCKJAW

Missile: D, DB, B & Punch
Mid Air Missile: F, F & Punch
Headbutt: D, DF, F & Kick
Uppercut: B, DB, D, DF, F & Kick
Triple Missile: B, DB, D, DF, F & Punch (Super)



CRUSHER

Uppercut: D, DF, F & Punch
Acid Spit: B, B, B & Kick or hold Back, Kick, Kick, Kick
Ground Lance: F, F & Punch
Air Lance: D, D & Punch (in air)

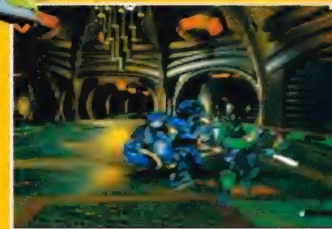


LOADER

Lightning: F, F, D & Punch
Headbutt: D, U & Punch
Ground Spike: D, DF, F & Punch
Leg Trip: B, DB, D & Kick
Electro Spikes: F, DF, D, DB, B & Punch (Super)
Triple Spike: B, DB, D, DF, F, DF, D, DB, B & Punch (Super)

PRIME-8

Ground Smash: D, D, D & Punch or hold Down, Punch, Punch, Punch
Swan Dive: D, DF, F & Punch
Rolling Crush: D, U & Kick
Slide Kick: B, DB, D & Kick



GRILLER

Ground Bash: B, DB, D, DF, F & Punch
Slap Attack: B, F, F & Punch
4-hit Chaos: F, DF, D, DB, B & Punch
Slide Kick: B, DB, D & Kick

V1-HYPER

Fireball: D, DF, F & Punch
Head Whip: D, DB, B & Punch
Low Whip: F, DF, D & Punch
Quick Dodge: Forward, Forward, Forward
Mystery Super: B, DB, D, DF, F & Punch (Super)
Execution: Back, Back, Back & Punch



CYBORG

Shoulder Barge: B, B, F & Kick
Flying Punch: D, DF, F & Punch
Air Fireball: F, F & Punch (in air)
Sweep Kick: B, DB, D & Kick
Chaos Combo: B, DB, D, DF, F & Punch (up to 25 hits!)
Cyborg 12 Chaos: F, DB, F & Punch (Super)



VANDAL

Buzzsaw Attack: D, DF, F & Punch
Jet Kick: F, F & Kick (in air)
Slide Kick: B, DB, D & Kick
Acid Attack: B, DB, D, DF, F, DF, D, DB, B & Punch (Super)



DEADLIFT

Low Fireball: B, DB, D & Punch
Teleport: F, F & Kick
High Fireball: D, DF, F & Punch
Up Fireball: D, DB, B & Punch
Sweep Kick: B, DB, D & Kick
Sword Attack: B, B, F & Punch
Deadlift Combo: F, DF, D, DB, B & Punch (Super — up to 50 hits!)

DETAIN

3-hit Chaos: F, F & Punch
Razor Blade Rush: B, F, F & Punch (or any preliminary move to F, F & P)
Headbutt: D, U & Punch
Sweep Kick: B, DB, D & Kick
Laser Beam: F, DF, D, DB, B & Punch (Super)

WAR

Barrel Roll: D, U & Punch
Mid Air Barrel: D, D & Punch (in air)
Grenade: B, DB, D & Punch
Slide Kick: B, DB, D & Kick
Flash Kick: D, DB, B & Kick
Dash Attack: B, F & Punch
War Inferno: B, DB, D, DF, F & Punch (Super)

SUIKWAN

Fireball: D, DB, B & Punch
Sword Dash: F, F & Punch
Air Dash: F, F & Kick
Slide Kick: B, DB, D & Kick
Samurai Spin: Hold F, Punch, Punch, Punch (Super)

**NECROBORG**

Flying Punch: D, U & Punch
Lightning: B, B, B & Punch or hold Back, Punch, Punch, Punch
Slide Kick: B, DB, D & Kick
Super Bolt: F, DF, D, DB, B & Kick (Super)

**ROOK**

Double Punch: D, DF, F & Punch
Jet Kick: D, DF, F & Kick
Air Jet Kick: F, F & Kick (in air)
Fireball: D, DB, B & Punch
Lightning Kick: Kick, Kick, Kick
Sweep Kick: B, DB, D & Kick
Triple Fireball: F, DF, D, DB, B, DB, D, DF, F & Punch (Super)
Jet Pack: B, B (hold Back to float)

**STEPPENWOLF**

Cannon: D, DF, F & Punch
Airstrike: D, DB, B & Punch
Guns: B, B, B & Punch or hold Back, Punch, Punch, Punch
Swan Dive: B, F & Kick
Body Slam: F, F & Kick
Air Slam: D, D & Kick (in air)
Artillery: B, DB, D, DF, F, DF, D, DB, B & Punch (Super)

**INSANE**

Bat Attack: D, DF, F & Kick
Ice Ball: D, DF, F & Punch
Low Ice Ball: D, DB, B & Kick
Sweep Kick: B, DB, D & Kick
Insane Attack: F, DF, D, DB, B & Punch (Super)



the 3-D action adventure



FADE TO BLACK



With the advent of CD-based machines, the world of in-game sound was always destined to be big business. In the first year of the PlayStation's release, PWEI, The Chemical Brothers and Leftfield have all done the gaming rounds. Eek, it's...

of the Pop Sta



Bis, Ash, Apollo 440, Goldie, Flood, Fluke, Photek, Future Sound of London... just some of the pop stars being lined up to provide music for future PlayStation games. But is this a good thing? Adam Peters goes looking for an argument...

With their hairslides, sweet-teeth and playground manifestoes, Bis are 1996's most unlikely chart success. Plenty of bands have followed the same music and style aesthetic over the years (Huggy Bear, Bratmobile, Shonen Knife, etc) without troubling the buyers at Woolworths or the writers of the *Who's Who of Music*. Bis, on the other hand, became the first unsigned band ever to play *Top of the Pops*. That was less than two months ago. Since then they've become a household name, appearing on the cover of all the major music magazines. At the time of writing, the group still haven't signed a record deal. They haven't even had any colour publicity photos done yet. All of which makes it

even more significant that Bis have already reportedly been signed up to provide music for a PlayStation game.

Pop stars have featured on games before (check our timeline later in this feature), but never on the scale we're about to experience. It's still very early days, but it looks like the use of techno starlets like the Chemical Brothers on *WipeOut* has prised the floodgates ajar. There's talk of music from indie heartthrobs Ash and ambient artists Apollo 440. Electronic Arts are working with top name producers, including Flood. Virgin are in discussion with jungle megastar Goldie. The Chemicals are likely to be joined by Photek, Fluke and Future Sound of London on *WipeOut 2097*. In most cases we're not talking about licensed

tracks, but pieces of music specially written for the games.

So where does this leave your traditional computer games musician? Scanning the 'Situations Vacant' column, or looking for their own record deal? We like a good scrap here at *PlayStation Plus*, so we invited some of those responsible for getting pop stars into games to meet up with some traditional computer musicians. We set up a table and a free beer tab in the pub next door, and got a photographer along to record any punches thrown. We also braved a crackly trans-Atlantic phone line to garner the views of the guy who invented computer game music in the first place.

So whack on your favourite album, crack open a tinny, and turn the page...

rs



Miles, Polygram: Yes, but it's not just about using pop stars, it's about having good music. With the new generation of machines that are out at the moment, the days of Spectrum and Commodore 64-style music are dead. People are spending so much time on the graphics and gameplay, why don't they spend more time on the music?

great gameplay, but what they don't tell us is you can't have all three at the same time. They never tell you what a bitch the machines are going to be to work with.

Tim Wright, Psygnosis: What we've pushed for time and time again is a CD drive with two heads, one either side; you'd

Richard: Do you think they could really be bothered with it? Sitting there, fiddling with all these little things?

Chris: Absolutely. I know 10 off the top of my head who are working with us now. There are four U2 producers and remixers, three of those people are keen to work with EA.

album, to use as the game music. That never happened, so they asked me to write something along similar lines. I wrote a tune, it was shit. I wrote another one, which was half-way okay. I wrote a third version and that's what went on the game. That's the only techno I'd ever written and that was a year ago.

What about the licensed tracks?

Miles: I suspect the three bands who were used in *WipEout* were used purely as a marketing tool.

Tim: Absolutely. They hated the Orbital track, they didn't like the Leftfield track, they liked the Chemical Brothers track, but that was just a fluke.

So are there people out there who just bought WipEout because of the bands that were on it?

Richard: I have to admit that I bought it just to hear what the music was like.

Miles: *WipEout* is such a difficult game to play. I bought it and crashed so often that I ended up spending more time listening to the music than playing it.

Eden Eyre, EXP: What about the *WipEout* album? It only sold 5,678 copies.

Tim: Yes, but have you heard it? It's absolutely drivel.

Eden: I have to disagree with that. They're top artists, but the album really wasn't marketed very well.

Is using pop stars for game music a good idea?

Richard Joseph, Audio Interactive: I was phoned up the other day and asked if I could provide some music for a PlayStation game. There was no room left for anything other than a few chip effects and some chip music, like on the Spectrum and Commodore 64. In my experience of new formats, you get this whole spell where people push the machine to its limits, then it gets serious. The programmers come in, and the graphics come in, and the sound is left with nothing.

Chris Nicholls, EA: One of the problems we're up against at the moment is the public's perception of games shipping on CD. It looks like a CD, people expect it to have CD quality sound. When you're working with a high intensity game that is really pushing the games machine's engine to its limits, the chances of having really good audio are, unfortunately, negligible.

Jon Hare, Sensible: The manufacturers tell us that the machines can play fantastic CD tracks, they have amazing graphics and

have one reading all your program data, all your landscape data, whatever the game requires, and the other one just reading the CD audio.

Jon: I think pop stars are going to have to get their heads round the fact that the technology we're working on is really not up to it. They're used to working on CD getting crystal quality stuff, at very worst it'll be like a crackly LP, but that's brilliant compared to what you can get out of the machines we're working on.

Tim: If you go to someone like U2 and say, "can you do music for a game?" They say, "sure," then you tell them they've got 256K of RAM and it's got to be 22kHz sampling, it's gibberish to them.

Chris: This is why EA is taking a different approach. Some of the most technically literate people in the music industry are the remixers and producers. They know where the music industry is heading, they also know about the technical side of things. Those people are exactly right for approaching.

But do you get the kudos, having a sticker with 'music by Flood' rather than 'music by U2' on your game?

Chris: In some ways, yes. Some producers have a very low profile, but someone like Flood has had name on so many best-selling albums over the years.

Miles: And the journalists will tell people that Flood, who has worked with U2, Smashing Pumpkins etc, is now working with EA.

Jon: You're just using him for marketing value, then.

Tim: Getting in a licensed band is 80% marketing bonus and 20% music bonus.

Getting wiped out

Tell us about the WipEout music...

Tim: Personally I'm totally into Eighties music, things that have a proper tune. With *WipEout* I was approached and told they were trying to get *Music for the Jilted Generation*, the Prodigy

Miles: Tim's music wasn't on the album. There was New Order's *Blue Monday* and other stuff that had nothing to do with the game.

Tim: I listened to that album and I thought it shouldn't sell. I got shit from people who expected it to be dance remixes of the music from the game. That's what it should have been.

Trainspotters v Artists

Are there any genres of game where pop stars simply shouldn't be used?

Chris: In some game genres, racing games and shoot-em-ups, you want a thumping techno track going all the way through the action. A lot of pop stars are very conversant with providing that kind of music. When you get on to other types of game, like long-form adventures, the word pop star is very misleading. The people who are used to making four-minute singles would find it very hard. You need to bring in film composers, people from the whole spectrum of pro-audio who produce a whole range of music styles.

Tim: Absolutely. There's a major assumption that all pop stars can actually write themes, music for a specific product. The sensible thing is to leap straight over the pop stars and go to someone like John Williams, who does scores for films.

Richard: I agree. There's a lot of people out there for write for television and films who could also do music for games. A lot of pop stars, if they were confronted with a game, probably wouldn't be able to write for it. They'd just bottle out.

Miles: You'd only use the artists that were actually able to write in that way.

Richard: I think the music industry will just slap any old acts onto games, whether they're any good or not.

Tim: There are a lot of pop stars who are at the top, they write good music that people like, but they can't write themes. They've got a lot of clout on the record label, so when they say "I'll go on that game," the record label aren't go to tell them they can't.

Miles: But the games company will.

Eden: Doesn't it make sense to have the professionals in the music industry writing for the professionals in the games industry? So far we've had trainspotters producing music for games, people who aren't musicians and never will be.

Tim: That's not true. You have people like Ben Dalglish who wrote music for the Commodore 64 and now conducts a symphony orchestra.

Chris: Yes, but there is still a cultural baggage of people who were around during the Commodore 64 and Atari days, people who were primarily programmers but had a desire to do music. That's something we're all aware of and don't want to carry on.

Jon: That's not just a problem

"There are a lot of pop stars who write good music that people like, but they can't write themes."

with music. The video games industry as a whole suffers from non-creative people in a creative role. As the technology has become more complicated, these people are struggling to keep up. We definitely need to have musicians rather than programmers writing the music.

Eden: But doesn't it make sense then to hire big name artists?

Jon: No, because the artists need

to understand that they're dealing with a totally different medium. It's like saying to Picasso: "Hey, you're a painter. Here's a piece of straw, make something decent out of it." The medium is so different.

Tim: There are two reasons why you get pop artists into your products. The first is marketing welly. You can get your product on the shelf and people will say, "wow, that's got a track by Mr X and Mr X is dead cool so we'll definitely buy that product." The second reason is that you assume because Mr X is up there in the charts, he's going to be able to produce decent music.

Ownership and control

Can the music and games industries really work together?

Chris: From a software publisher's point of view, you want to be able to own your property, protect it and use it in the future. The problem when you start working with a band or an artist who is signed to another publisher, is that you're never going to get the rights to own the music. If you're thinking about releasing the soundtrack as a standalone product, you'd want to be making money from it, but if the music is owned by another publisher that simply is not going to happen.

Miles: Yes it will. What will happen in the future - and this one of the things that I'm trying to sort out at the moment - is that music in a game will be treated like music in a film. If one of our tracks goes in a film and comes out on a soundtrack album, we get money from it, the people that produced the film get percentage points on that, and the record company that released the album get money from it. That's the way it should work for games, but no-one's done it yet. I've been trying and hitting brick walls on all sides, except for one game that will hopefully break

Continued over

SIX SYMBOLS

The Expert Panel



Miles
Polygram Music
The man responsible for signing Shampoo and The Bluetones. Miles works in A&R for Polygram, the owners of Polydor, London and Island Records. Most of the video games industry wants to rip his limbs off because of a letter he sent to trade mag CTW about traditional game music being crap. Currently licensing out tracks from Polygram bands to software companies.



Tim Wright
Psygnosis
Senior Sound Artist at Psygnosis. Tim wrote all of the non-celebrity music in *WipEout*. Currently working on music for *WipEout 2097*, a mixture of his own stuff and music from bands like Photek and Future Sound of London. Tim's own album is released shortly, under his techno pseudonym, Cold Storage.



Eden Eyre
EXP/Virgin Interactive
Eden works for EXP, the music division operating within Virgin Interactive, the games company famous for their shock-tactic advertising. EXP are currently negotiating to get jungle superstar Goldie to provide the music for an upcoming game.



Chris Nicholls
Electronic Arts
Chris is Head of the European Audio Operation at EA, the world's biggest video games company. EA are looking to film musicians and record producers, rather than pop stars, for their music. Currently working with a number of big names, including U2's producer, Flood.



Richard Joseph
Audio Interactive
A traditional computer musician, Richard owns a recording studio at Pinewood film studios. He spent 15 years as a professional recording musician, before moving into computers in the mid-Eighties. Thinks the music industry is full of tossers. His main client is Sensible Software.



Jon Hare
Sensible Software
Jon and his friend Chris set up a band, out of which grew a games company, Sensible Software. Responsible for *Sensible Soccer*, the world's greatest computer game. Lists music as his main passion, though not his career.



down all these barriers. It's being produced by a games company that is involved at a senior level with a record company, but they've had so many problems with the record label that they've come to me. It's going to be a half and half mixture of licensed tracks and things that have been written specifically for the game.

Eden: Whereas I'm doing a game that is being specifically written for the track, which is by Goldie. Record labels are trying to turn record label people into interactive people, whereas EXP is a music company set up by an interactive company. We're hoping to open up a whole new market, turning music fans into gamers. They like an artist so they'll buy a game because they want to hear his music.

Richard: I think you're cheapening games. Just using them to market a music artist, rather than having the game for the game's sake.

Eden: But if you're using a genre of music for a game, then why don't you use the best person of that genre?

Richard: I agree with that, but a lot of the time it's just tokenism. It's like when they got Stewart Copeland to do the music for the film *Wall Street* and it was a pile of crap. It just so happens that the musical trends at the moment, particularly dance music, are ideally suited to games. But if all that fell away and you had just your Blurs and Pulp, then that would not work.

Battle of the bands

Is there a time in the future when we'll have the top two in the games chart, one featuring music by Blur and one with music from Oasis? Music that has nothing to do with the game and is there simply to sell more copies.

Jon: No, because music isn't the most important part of the game, the gameplay is. The music is just

something that gets chucked on at the end.

Chris: I'm not convinced that the music industry understands that the music isn't the most important part.

Richard: I've been watching this for years, waiting for people like Miles to come along, muscle in and try to take over an art form that guys like us have been involved in for years.

Chris: Isn't it the other way round as well? We're moving into CD, a medium the music industry has been using for a long time.

Jon: I think if the music industry is to work with the games industry, it has to be the games industry that controls things. The games industry deals with the most complicated part, the music side of it has to be triggered by the games side of it. If the music industry wants to chat up the games industry, it probably shouldn't start by sticking its tongue down our throat.

If there was a National Union of

"[game music] is not about pop stars, it is about good music..."

Computer Musicians, how would they react to their members' work being taken by pop stars?

Miles: People who are doing music for games should be good, and a lot of it isn't. A lot of it is crap and being done by untalented people.

Richard: There's a lot of games where the graphics are crap or the gameplay. Why single out music? You've got a situation where a lot of people have been making music for computers for years. Suddenly we're being told that it's all crap, the days of



bleeps are over, but the effort that goes into that music, it's not crap, it's a bunch of people fighting against the odds, fighting against technology. There's a lot of people even now in the industry itching to get on CD.

Miles: The talented people are the people who are making the good music.

Tim: But who decides what's good music?

Jon: All three of the musicians sitting round this table, Richard, Chris and Tim, produce their own music, CD quality music. They want to get that released commercially, but they haven't got an established face. Computers don't reproduce music properly.

Tim: It's like the Chemical Brothers going on stage with a Bontempi, and telling them that's all they're allowed to use.

Chris: Another problem is that a lot of people working in-house are working under very Draconian work contracts that say everything you do is owned by the company.

Jon: Most of the people who employ guys like this don't even

think they're musicians, just people there to provide a few sounds for their games.

Tim: Can I differ? I went to our Managing Director and told him that I wanted to release an album. I offered to pay for it and pay him a royalty for all the time I used on the Psynosis equipment. He said, "bollocks to that, I'll release it for you."

Trading places

Can music from a game top the charts in the same way themes from films have?

Tim: If you have a game where the adverts are of a nun being blasted in the head with blood everywhere, it will get coverage in *The Sun*. You then release a novelty record about a nun getting blasted, it will do really well.

Miles: I was one of the co-writers of the *Lemmings* record which got to Number 42 in the charts with the highest ever climb from a midweek chart position. It was actually quite good, the rap was good, the reason it didn't do better was because the verses were round the wrong way. That might sound pathetic, but something like that matters so much. It meant we got no radio play.

We've had music from pop stars being put into games, how about footage of games being included in pop videos?

Miles: The new Shampoo video - which has been shown in Japan for the last six months and is out here soon - is all about the girls going into a racing game.

Tim: Have they been told to do this, or are they doing it of their own volition?

Miles: They got four video scripts and decided themselves that they wanted to go with that one.

Shampoo have been quoted many times as saying they hate video



games. They even had a song on their debut album slagging off Nintendo GameBoys. This was before they became EMI's biggest selling act in Japan, the home of video games. Might that have something to do with it?

Tim: Yeah.

Miles: No, nothing at all.

Pick your own

Isn't it always going to be the case that people will turn the music down on a game and listen to their own CDs?

Jon: I turn the sound down a lot because it pisses me off.

Richard: I have to turn the sound down when I play *WipeOut* because I listen to Tim's music so much that I can't concentrate on the game.

Tim: There are some people who turn the music down, the sound effects up, and then put on a Bon Jovi CD or something.

You're playing the same game for a week. It might have the best music in the world, but pretty soon you'll want to listen to something else.

Richard: I agree, but how do you get round this problem even with name acts.

I don't think that you do. Even with WipeOut, aren't people going to be listening to their own CDs, whether it's a Chemical Brothers album or a Wet Wet Wet one?

Miles: I think that *WipeOut* is one of the few games where I disagree with that. I got a SCART lead for my PlayStation just so I could hear the music in stereo.

Looking ahead

So what does the future hold?

Jon: What needs to happen is for people at the top of companies to get together and speak to one another, so you get music companies, games companies and film companies working together.

Miles: People are scared. You've got lots of music companies that own games companies, but the two don't work together. A lot of the music bosses don't understand the technology, therefore they don't get involved.

Eden: Virgin Interactive have a joint venture with Virgin Records. That's why we have a record company [EXP] within an interactive company, as opposed to a major who might have an interactive company where no-one knows about each other.

Miles: Fair enough, so you lot

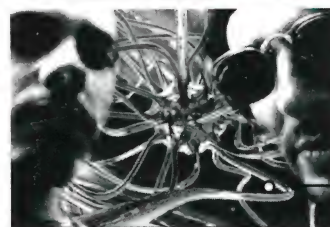
PLAYING IN TIME: A Musical History



1984: **ROB HUBBARD** becomes the first famous name in the world of computer musicians. Working on the Commodore 64, he turns computer music into something more than just a few random beeps. As Tim Wright of *Psychosis* puts it, "you couldn't wait to hear each new game, Rob used a different style of music every time."



1985: **FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD** are the first pop stars to feature in a game. *Welcome to the Pleasuredome* by Ocean Software is an adventure game based around the infamous Scousers. The package also includes a tape with a Frankie song on it, to listen to on your hi-fi while you're playing.



1989: **BOMB THE BASS** main man Tim Simenon (now a famous producer) provides the music for Mirrorsoft game *Xenon 2: Megablast*. "Eric Matthews, the programmer, was listening to the Bomb the Bass album a lot while writing the game," recalls Eric's colleague, Tom Watson. "He thought the music would be good to use as the rhythm really fitted the game. It was an excellent promotion for both parties to cross-market, both creatively and commercially."

1992: **CAPTAIN SENSIBLE** approaches Jon Hare of Sensible Software: "He phoned me up and said, 'you've got the same name as me, let's do a tune'. He wrote a couple of sporty tunes for *Sensible Soccer* and Richard Joseph did a computer version. What Captain Sensible had neglected to tell us, unfortunately, was that he couldn't sell it to us. We were taken to court by his publishers and ended up having to pay them a load of royalties."

BETTY BOO is famous for 15 minutes - just long enough to provide music for *Magic Pockets*, another Eric Matthews game.

1993: **SOUNDGARDEN**, **THERAPY?** and **SWERVEDRIVER** become the first artists to have their music appear on a game in glorious CD sound. Tracks by all three acts feature in the 3DO version of *Road Rash* from Electronic Arts.

1994: **ALIEN SEX FIEND**, **RICK WAKEMAN** and Mike Edwards from **JESUS JONES** provide music for various games.



1995: **CHEMICAL BROTHERS** and **LEFTFIELD** provide music for *WipeOut* on the PlayStation. **ORBITAL** write a track specially for the game. This marks the start of a new phase in celebrity game music, playing on the fact that Sony are marketing their machine towards a trendy, club-going audience.

POP WILL EAT ITSELF, rumoured to be concentrating only on music for games from now on, provide the sounds for *Loaded*.



1996 **FUTURE SOUND OF LONDON**, **FLUKE** and **PHOTEK** are amongst acts scheduled to write music for *WipeOut 2097*, alongside old favourites like the Chemical Brothers.

FLOOD, the legendary U2 producer, is one of many studio gurus being courted by Electronic Arts for music for upcoming games.



GOLDIE has been approached for a forthcoming Virgin Interactive title.

BIS, **ASH** and **APOLLO 440** are rumoured to be involved in providing music for upcoming games for an unnamed software company. There is talk of music being incorporated into "a whole new genre of game".





have got the right idea.

Will we see computer musicians releasing records?

Miles: Some of them do it already. You've got Tim here and you've got Mike Ash at Domark, both of whom have got records coming out under various names. I think if the music's good enough it should come out, and if it isn't, it shouldn't.

If you became successful as a pop artist, Tim, would you chuck in writing for games?

Tim: If a record label says to me, "come and sign for us, we'll make you a mint," of course I'll do it.

What about you, Richard, would you move back into becoming a recording artist?

Richard: Yes, but only as a sideline. I think it's something which should be approached with innocence and enjoyment.

Tim: I think it's great that we're getting acts who've been in the charts writing for games, as it removes the stigma of being a video games musician.

Jon: I'd certainly like to work with name artists, but only if it was on our terms.

Tim: On *WipEout* we had to licence in what was made available to us. Orbital did write a track specially, but I'm under the impression they were rushed on that and didn't really know what they were doing. With *WipEout 2097*, all the acts - Future Sound of London, Photek, Fluke and the others - they're all writing specifically for us. They've got a video of the game. If what they produce is shit, it proves they can't write a theme.

Would you still have to use it?

Tim: No, it is up to us what we use. I'm amazed that it is up to us.

Miles: That's brilliant, you're in control like film companies are. A film company will pitch out each track to three different bands and use whichever one's best.

Tim: I'm amazed that Future

Sound of London produced a track for us. It was in 3/4, we said, "nice track, but can we have it 4/4?" They did that for us. We've gone back to them again, they've changed it again. That's what we like, they're interacting with us.

Jon: Video games have got such a low public perception in terms of mass media that a band like Oasis could come along and produce an absolutely terrible piece of music for a video game, and it wouldn't affect their reputation one bit.

Tim: I'd agree with that 100%, but it should do.

Miles: It will do.

Tim: Give it five or six years and it will do.

Miles: I think someone round this table will come up with the formula for blending music and games, it'll work and it'll open the doors for everyone else. I hope that one thing that comes out of this discussion is that people start to see each other's point of view and stop being so idealistic. Some people in the music industry are holding everything back. There are people in the games industry, on the music side of things, who aren't really good enough.

THE GODFATHER: Rob Hubbard

"Rob Hubbard was there on the ground floor when everything started on the Commodore 64, I hope I'm there on the ground floor at the time computer musicians start crossing over into the mainstream." So says the new wonderboy of games music, Tim Wright. But what does the original computer musician, Mr Hubbard himself, make of the way things are going? The guy who started it all no longer produces game music, but he still works in the industry. We tracked him down to the Californian headquarters of Electronic Arts. 'Fess up, Rob...

"How has music in games changed? It's a whole different ball game. Every year it seems to be different. The whole industry is moving away from the fact that a few years ago it was purely a hobbyist industry. The industry is a lot more mature. Of course people are going to hire bands, the same way they hire actors - like Mark Hamill and Malcolm McDowell in *Wing Commander III*. A lot of big games in the future will use traditional composers, people from films. That's the way it's going to go. We're already utilising some of those people, some phenomenally gifted composers, and that's another example of the way the whole industry is going more mainstream.

"We had a blast in the old days. In the mid-Eighties, I couldn't wait to turn on a computer to work on this stuff. It was fun, but you can't live in the past. I think if I hadn't been involved in computer music, someone else would have come along and done the things I did. It's a natural progression. Now we have CD, the beauty of which is that you can have music of a much better quality. For years it was always a case of the audio being thrown in on the last three or four weeks of a project. With CD the music is considered a lot earlier, things are planned a lot more, everything is more integrated. Games are moving towards the mainstream of entertainment, and I think someone starting out as a computer musician today will find things really tough - they'll be competing against people who have been doing it for years, plus famous artists too."



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RETRO ROCKET

Whenever I ask the shops or mail order companies when *Namco Museum Volume 1* is being released, most know nothing about it. What is going on? Some say it will never get a UK release. It's the same with the *Williams Arcade Classic* disc – one shop said it's only going to appear on PC CD-ROM. Gasp!! Many of the stores I asked also said that even if such games were available, they wouldn't stock them because they regard retro games as non-sellers – what about *Paradious*? Help! Please give me some information about all this – I love retro, especially *Robotron*.
Mick Richardson, Felixstowe

A quick glance through the mail-order specialists in the last issue of *PlayStation Plus* should reveal UK versions of the Namco collection for sale. *Williams Arcade Classics* is due within the next couple of months, and a couple of them have advertised it already. When you buy your copy, take it in to the stores that told you it wouldn't exist and politely suggest they research their answers rather than just making them up!

DOCTOR'S ORDERS

I hope you can help me as I've got a problem with *Doom*. You may think I'm weird or just a saddy hypochondriac, but when I play it, I feel really sick. Given some quality time with *Doom* and I get extremely dizzy. It's nothing to do with the tons of blood 'n' gore, cos I'm from Glasgow and I'm tough. I realise you're not doctors but please help me. I want to like *Doom* and so any explanations, however bizarre, are welcome.

Raymond Dillon, Crosshill

Every PlayStation game carries a small warning about this in the front of the booklet. Basically, dizziness can occur easily in playing games, especially ones which move at the speed of *Doom* and need a large degree of concentration. You shouldn't use a game for more than an hour without a brief, say ten minute, break. Also, if you are using a small television, say a portable, then that adds to the eye-strain. To be honest though, you're right. We're not doctors, and it could save you a lot of hassle if you went and had a quick word with one.

YER ACTUA FOOTIE

Regarding the bugs and flaws in *Actua Soccer* mentioned in Issue 8, I've noticed yet another. I took my PlayStation to my brother's house for a two-player game. We were about thirty seconds into the game – I was Brazil and he was Italy – when he took the ball off me and had a shot at the goalmouth. As soon as he'd done this, the game paused and the message **GAME PAUSED – CONTROLLER REMOVED** flashed up. Both controllers were still connected to the PlayStation, however. After doing various joy-pad combinations, we found that if we pressed Up, Left and ■ while playing the two player game, the game paused and flashed up that message. This is the most frustrating thing I have ever seen and I had to take my copy back.

Mark Duffy, Workington



Regarding the *Actua Soccer* bugs mentioned in Issue 8, I, too, have come across the one that sends the camera view haywire after a substitution is made. But there is a solution which doesn't affect the camera at all. Just before making your substitution, simply swap your camera to the Wire Cam. After the substitution has been made, you can switch your camera back to your original chosen view. This is a very simple procedure and not remotely as drastic as quitting the game every time.

On the subject of *Actua Soccer*, I would like to point out that the cheat to select the secret team (the Gremlin Showbiz XI) is not there. After unsuccessfully trying to access the secret team, I decided to 'phone Gremlin and see if I was doing anything wrong. I was amazed to learn that the cheat had actually been removed prior to distribution, due to memory restrictions. I hope therefore that you can print this letter to save other people spending time and getting frustrated trying to access a cheat that simply does not exist.

Ian Johnson, Nottingham

(BA)LONE(Y) SOLDIER

I have been concerned about the playability (or, rather, the lack of it) of certain PlayStation games, and would like to warn anyone who is maybe considering *Lone Soldier*. As I am a more mature games player I well remember the *Commando* coin-op, and thought that the 32bit revamped graphics would make a superb game. Oops – £35 down the pan. Why? The game is virtually unplayable, the main character ends up inch-



es away from enemies and is still unable to hit anything and a more annoying and unworkable targeting system would be hard to imagine. In short, *Lone Soldier* is total crap and instead of the 72% you gave it, I would award it no more than 30% – and that would be for the opening sequence.

On a more positive note, I'm delighted at the amount of sims and strategy games in development: *Command and Conquer*, *Sim City 2000*, *Transport Tycoon* etc. What about *Civilisation*? Now in it's second incarnation on PC, this is a superb game well worth getting the PlayStation treatment.

P Mason, Maghull

No sign of *Civilisation* on the PlayStation. C'est la vie.

PRODUCT PLACEMENT 2

I know you appreciate a bit of topical debate, so I'd like to expand upon a letter published in Issue 8 regarding advertising in games. What seems a great idea in theory could be a massive disaster if exploited by the games companies. I am all for cheaper games and feel putting adverts for major products in them would be a good way to reduce costs consumer-wise. However, despite the advantage of cheaper games, there are all sorts of



problems which can arise as a result of greed and could irritate and ultimately destroy gamer's enjoyment.

What if games developers feel like getting lots of money from any old advertisements, all crammed into games that they don't really suit. It's all very well putting advertisements into racing games and the like, where it is much more appropriate to see a Coke billboard, but can you imagine every type of game having an advert between levels, or after every game? What we do not seem to realise is that advertisers are greedy and you only have to see all the sponsored game shows, travel shows and dramas to see how they stick a promotion in at every chance. Games will be taken over and gamers will become frustrated at having to sit through clips of adverts. Even if it does not gel with a game, you will experience products being rammed down your throat. Games developers may go to such an extent that loading times are increased just to fit an advert in between a level or before a game.

Yes, I know it seems a bit extreme of me to say this, but experience shows us that advertisers are unlikely to keep it simple and stay restricted to the odd billboard, and neither will developers refuse their cash. Take *Adidas Power Soccer* for example. It is not an extreme case of advertising overload but gets to the point where the gamer is irritated by an FMV sequence every half time. I have read many reviews in which the reviewer claims to be irritated by the over endorsement of Adidas products, and this type of advertising suits the game. Can you imagine advertising that does not?

The result of advertising exploitation would be frustration for the gamer and not definite significant price reduction. Is *Adidas Power Soccer* going to be any cheaper? At £44.99, I don't think so. Advertising only seems a good idea if it is controlled, and I don't think it would be.

Andrew Azzopardi, London

Regarding Peter Stanley's letter in Issue 8, I also think it is a good idea to sell advertising space on games, but there is a problem with it. It would only work on sports games. Why? Well, in games like *beat 'em ups* and others, such as *Resident Evil* or *Doom* – games of that nature – you could not make it work. Just imagine: you're walking down a dark corridor, and you've just been attacked by a zombie with its arm hanging off and an eyeball popping out. After you've

slipped in a puddle of something unpleasant, you come to a door, open it and... there's a huge sign saying "Have a nice refreshing can of cola!"

The effect would be rather broken, don't you think? I suppose you could have pick-ups lying around with cola or Nike written on the side, but there's still a problem with that. The items would be far too small and not noticeable enough. Somehow, I don't think companies are going to spend their money on a game where their product might not even get noticed.

Ian Gregg, Brierley Hill

ALIENS Vs...

I recently purchased *Alien Trilogy*, and I loved playing it. It seemed to have everything: playability, lastability, good graphics etc and I couldn't find a fault with it. Until now. I've completed it in four weeks and feel cheated out of £45. It was reasonably easy, not to mention that a third of the levels were Bonus Levels. The Queen aliens were not half as hard as I thought they would be. When I completed *Doom* I felt a bit disappointed but at least I got my money's worth.

Billy Fogg, Accrington

Upon reading your review and playing the game, I think I can safely say that *Doom* is cack compared to *Alien Trilogy*, and here are my reasons for this judgement.

- 1) *Alien Trilogy* actually has a point to the game. Instead of just blowing things up and going on to the next level, you actually have to do missions which, if not completed properly, have to be done again.
- 2) *Alien Trilogy* has rooms which actually mean something, where certain necessary pick-ups can only be found, whereas in *Doom* you wander around pointless corridors and rooms which have no reason to exist at all.
- 3) *Alien Trilogy* has more detail, better graphics and moves along without making you collapse with a headache.
- 4) *Alien Trilogy* has aliens which chase you through corridors until they die of exhaustion, but in *Doom* the demons almost sit there like lemons, asking for a missile up their rear ends.

Okay, so maybe Ripley can't climb a step higher than her knees or walk up a slope in less than eight seconds, but who gives a damn? *Alien Trilogy* shows what a PlayStation was really meant for, and I'm glad I didn't make the mistake of buying *Doom*.

Russell Davis, Gillingham



FAQ

The most frequently asked questions of the month are, once again, met with straight answers.

Were GT Interactive showing *Mortal Kombat Trilogy* at E3? If so, can any more light be thrown on whether it is three games on one CD or a mix of the best bits of the trilogy?

GT were indeed showing *MK Trilogy*, and the game is taking the shape of an amalgamation of all three titles. Basically, Williams have created a game wherein the player can select any character from the games and pit them against any backdrop from the three. This also extends to all the 'Ultimate' characters, and when dual versions of a character are applicable ('old' and 'new' Sub-Zero, for example), both are available. There's no firm release date for the CD as of yet, but expect a review a little nearer Christmas, with a release date sometime in November.

What are EA and Fox planning for their *X Files* game?

The *X Files* game takes the form of a point 'n' click adventure, but a PlayStation version is ages away. Development is leading on PC and Mac versions, but Fox have confirmed that David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson will be reprising their roles as Mulder and Scully for the title. Apparently, Chris Carter (the creator of the show) is overseeing every step of the project, and Fox Interactive are keen to have the game accepted as 'proper' episode of the series. Details of the plot and a PlayStation release date are woolly but, all the same, Fox are promising a number of red herrings and non-linear gameplay when it finally hits the shelves.

Will Ocean be releasing the recent *Worm Reinforcements* for the PlayStation?

Ocean are as keen as mustard to release *Worm Reinforcements* for the PlayStation, but feel they can't warrant releasing what is essentially a data disk as a full-price title. However, one avenue they are exploring (and was given to them by our editor, Steve) is to release the extra data on a memory card. The system would then work along the same lines as Datel's cheat cards, with the game automatically detecting the extra game sections as it loads. If so, expandable games could become big business – and at less than twenty quid to the buyer.

Are Shiny creating games for the PlayStation?

Earthworm Jim superstars, Shiny's first Sony title will be *Murder, Death Kill* which is an all-out shoot 'em up. There's no release date yet, but Interplay are the chaps releasing it.

NEXT MONTH

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THE ULTIMATE FILM LICENCE?

Yes, we know we promised the review several months ago, but the next edition of *PlayStation Plus* will indeed feature the full review of EA and Fox Interactive's three-in-one blockbuster.

Similarly, the fruits of E3 will be coming our way, with in-depth coverage of *Destruction Derby 2*, *Batman Forever*, and *Crash Bandicoot*, while the old farts among you can take a trip down memory lane with Acclaim's *Bubble Bobble Trilogy*.

So, for the ultimate in news, previews and reviews - along with features on the issue that count - be first in line for the sun-filled August edition of *PlayStation Plus*.

ISSUE 11: ON SALE JULY 25th

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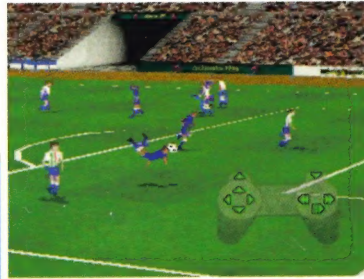
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